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THE DRAMATIC WORKS

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M O L I È R E

RENDERED INTO ENGLISH

By HENRI VAN LAUN

A NEW EDITION

WITH A PREFATORY MEMOIR, INTRODUCTORY NOTICES, AND NOTES

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TABLE OF CONTENTS.

VOLUME SECOND.

	PAGE
THE PRINCESS OF ELIS.	
<i>La Princesse d'Élide</i>	I
DON JUAN; OR, THE FEAST WITH THE STATUE.	
<i>Don Juan; ou, Le Festin de Pierre</i>	69
LOVE IS THE BEST DOCTOR.	
<i>L'Amour Médecin</i>	135
THE MISANTHROPE.	
<i>Le Misanthrope</i>	171
THE PHYSICIAN IN SPITE OF HIMSELF.	
<i>Le Médecin Malgré lui</i>	247
MELICERTE.	
<i>Comédie Pastorale Héroïque</i>	301
A COMIC PASTORAL.	
<i>Pastorale Comique,</i>	321
THE SICILIAN; OR, LOVE MAKES THE PAINTER.	
<i>Le Sicilien; ou, L'Am ur Peintre</i>	333
TARTUFFE; OR, THE HYPOCRITE.	
<i>Tartuffe; ou, L'Imposteur</i>	361
AMPHITRYON.	
<i>Amphitryon Comédie</i>	455
GEORGE DANDIN; OR, THE ABASHED HUSBAND.	
<i>George Dandin; ou, Le Mari Confondu</i>	515

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

VOLUME SECOND.

	PAGE
I. THE PHYSICIAN IN SPITE OF HIMSELF. Act II., Sc. 4. <i>Le Médecin Malgré lui</i>	Frontispiece
II. DON JUAN. Act II., Scene 5. <i>Don Juan; ou, Le Festin de Pierre</i>	95
III. THE MISANTHROPE. Act II., Scene 5. <i>Le Misanthrope</i>	209
IV. TARTUFFE. Act III., Scene 6. <i>Tartuffe; ou, L'Imposteur</i>	429
V. AMPHITRYON. Act I., Scene 2. <i>Amphitryon Comédie</i>	471
VI. GEORGE DANDIN. Act II., Scene 3. <i>George Dandin; ou, Le Mari Confondu</i>	545

LA PRINCESSE D'ÉLIDE.

COMÉDIE-BALLET.

THE PRINCESS OF ELIS.

A COMEDY-BALLET IN FIVE ACTS.

(THE ORIGINAL PARTLY IN PROSE AND PARTLY IN VERSE.)

8TH MAY 1664.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

IN the month of May 1664, Louis XIV. entertained the Queen-mother, Anne of Austria, and his own wife, Maria Theresa, with a brilliant and sumptuous fête at Versailles. It began on the 7th, and lasted a whole week. The duke de Saint-Aignan was commissioned to superintend the arrangements; and the plan he adopted was suggested by the materials which he discovered in the 6th and 7th cantos of Ariosto's epic poem, *Orlando Furioso*, which describe the sojourn of Rogero in the isle and palace of the enchantress Alcina. The king was Rogero, whilst the princes and courtiers personified the other characters mentioned in the poem. We shall give a description of this fête farther on.

In this fête, the second day was distinguished by the representation of *The Princes of Elis*; and subsequent days saw the production of *The Bores*, *The Forced Marriage*, and the first three acts of *Tartuffe*. For their services on this occasion, Molière's troupe received the sum of 4,000 livres.

The Princess of Elis, a comedy-ballet, was intended to represent the struggle between the affections of the male and female sex,—a struggle in which victory often remains with the one who seems the farthest from obtaining it. Shakespeare has also attempted to sketch this strife in *Much ado about Nothing*, in *As You like it*, and in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Molière composed this comedy-ballet at the special request of the king; and it was conceived in a romantic vein suitable to the character of the fête. The author's natural flow of wit and humour was checked by the necessity of accommodating himself to the conventionalities of courtly propriety; and it must be admitted that Molière mingled a good deal of water with his wine, in order to please the fastidious palates of the courtiers. He borrowed his subject from Moreto's Spanish comedy, *El Desden con el Desden* (Scorn for Scorn). The idea is pretty, and there is abundant room for the development of plot and passion; but the genius of the adapter was cramped, and *The Princess of Elis* is certainly not one of his happiest efforts. He has narrowed, rather than improved upon, the treatment of Moreto; he has blunted the edge of the Spaniard's keenness, and, taking the situations almost too punctiliously, has rendered them bare and barren. He transports the scene to Elis; and the Count of Urgel, the Prince of Bearn, the Count of Foix, are disguised under the Princes of Ithaca, Pylos, and Messena. He was hurried in his work; and, almost

as if himself craving for relief from an unwelcome mood, he created and sustained the character of the fool Moron,—a coward who gives good advice, and is, on the whole, not unlike Butler's Hudibras.

The piece was again produced in July of the same year at Fontainebleau, before the Pope's Legate; and in November and December, it had a run of twenty-five days at the theatre of the Palais-Royal. It undoubtedly hit the mark with some amongst Molière's contemporaries whose tastes were similar to those of the court. As an ephemeral production, therefore, designed for a temporary purpose, it may be held to have been successful.

James Miller wrote a play called *The Universal Passion*, acted at the Theatre, Drury Lane, on the 28th of February, 1737, which consists of Shakespeare's *Much ado about Nothing*, and Molière's *Princess of Elis*. He acknowledges his obligations to Shakespeare, but does not say anything about the French dramatist. In the dedication of *The Universal Passion* to Frederick Frankland, Esq., it is stated, that "the strict Regard I have had to Decency and good manners . . . is the principal Merit . . . the World is at present happily inclin'd to support what is produced with that Intention." The Prologue, spoken by Mr. Cibber, harps on the same string, and ends thus :

"Howe'er, this Merit he at least can claim,
That sacred Decency's his constant Aim;
There's nought but what an Anchoret might hear,
No Sentence that can wound the chastest Ear . . .
To your Protection Shakespeare's Offspring take,
And save the Orphan for the Father's Sake."

George Hyde wrote *Love's Victory; or the School for Pride*, a comedy in five acts, founded on the Spanish of Moreto, and performed at Covent-Garden, November 16, 1825. As Molière borrowed from the same source, there is a great similarity in the plot of both plays, but Hyde has chiefly followed the arrangement of a German author, West, and can therefore hardly be said to have imitated Molière.

As we have already mentioned, Molière's play formed part of the court entertainment, and was published in *Les Plaisirs de l'Isle Enchantée : Course de Bague, Collation ornée de Machines, Comédie de Molière de la Princesse d'Elide, mêlée de Danse et de Musique Ballet du Palais d'Alcine, Feu d'Artifice : Et autres Festes galantes et magnifiques ; faites par le Roy à Versailles, le 7 May, 1664. Et continuées plusieurs autres Jours. Paris, Robert Ballard, 1665*. Although the description of *The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island* was not written by Molière, who wrote only comedy, it is inserted in the first collected edition of our author's works; and I give it here as a specimen of the complimentary style of the official catalogue of entertainments of Louis XIV. I am indebted for the completeness and accuracy of nearly all the notes which illustrate *Les Plaisirs de l'Isle Enchantée*, to M. Paul Lacroix, the Bibliothécaire de l'Arsenal, well known as the Bibliophile Jacob, who kindly communicated to me the genealogy and short history of the noble ladies and gentlemen who took part in the festivities at Versailles. These fêtes, given nominally in honour of the two Queens, but in reality to please the queen, Mademoiselle de la Vallière, "whom the king delighteth to honour," lasted seven days; the description opens thus ;—

"The King, wishing to give to the Queen and the whole Court the pleasure of some uncommon entertainments, in a spot adorned with all

the beauties to be admired in a Country Seat, chose for that purpose Versailles, four leagues from Paris. It is a seat which may justly be called an Enchanted Palace so much have the embellishments of Art seconded the care which Nature has taken to render it perfect. It is every way charming; everything pleases both within and without: gold and marble vie there in beauty and splendour; and although it is not so extensive as some of her Majesty's other Palaces, yet all things there are so polished, so well contrived, and so perfect, that nothing can equal them. Its symmetry, the richness of its furniture, the beauty of its walks, and the infinite number of its flowers, as well as of its orange-trees, render the neighborhood of that place worthy of its singular rarity. The different animals within the two parks and the menagerie, wherein are several courts, in the figure of stars, with ponds for the water-fowl, together with great structures, add pleasure to magnificence, and create a palace in which nothing can be found to criticise."¹

First Day of the Pleasures of the Enchanted Island.

It was in this beautiful place that on the fifth of May all the Court met, and that the King treated above six hundred persons till the fourteenth, not reckoning a great number of persons necessary in the dancing and in the play, besides all kinds of workmen who came from Paris; so that they looked like a small army.

The very heavens appeared to favour his Majesty's designs, since in a season in which it almost always rains, there was only a slight wind, which seemed to rise solely in order to show that the King's foresight and power were proof against the greatest inconveniences. High cloths, wooden buildings, run up almost in an instant, and a prodigious number of torches of white wax, to supply daily the place of above four thousand wax candles, resisted the wind, which everywhere else would have rendered these diversions almost impracticable.

Monsieur de Vigarani, a gentleman from Modena, very skilful in all such things, invented and proposed these. The King commanded the duke de Saint-Aignan, who was then first Gentleman of the Chamber,² and who had ere this arranged several very agreeable balls, to plan something which might contain, connect, and group them all, so that they could not fail to please.

He took for his subject the Palace of Alcina,³ which gave the name to

¹ I am, of course, not answerable for the peculiar style of the official catalogue. A "Collation adorned with machines" would be rather hard to digest in the present times. One statement in the opening paragraph is also startling: "Nature has taken care to render it (Versailles) perfect." Now Nature has taken no care to render Versailles perfect; and it is said to have cost so much money, that Louis XIV. did not like the fabulous sums spent on it to be known, but threw the accounts into the fire. The palace and gardens of Versailles were begun in 1661, and not finished until 1684. The King did not reside there until 1682, and according to A. de Laborde, *Versailles ancien et moderne*, in 1664 the palace was still in the same state as Louis XIII. had left it.

² Francis I. instituted in 1545 the post of *Gentilhomme de la chambre du roi*, of which there were two at the first, and afterwards four. Each served a year, and received 9500 livres, besides considerable perquisites, and a pension of 4500 livres. Their duties were to give orders that the King's first mourning garments should be made, as well as his ball, ballet, and theatrical dresses; they also regulated the mourning of the members and officers of the royal household and family, the ordinary and extraordinary expenses for the King, his entertainments, &c.

³ Alcina, who changed her lovers into trees, stones, fountains, or beasts, according to her fancy, is, in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, the personification of carnal pleasure.

The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island, because, according to Ariosto, the brave Rogero, and several other good knights, were detained there by the spell of beauty (though it was artificial), and by the incantations of that enchantress, and were delivered, after a long time spent in pleasures, by a ring, which destroyed the enchantment. It was the ring of Angelica, which Melissa, under the disguise of old Atlantes, at length placed upon Rogero's finger.

In a few days there was fitted up a round, where four great alleys met between high palisades, with four porticos thirty-five feet high and twenty-two feet square, and several festoons enriched with gold and divers paintings, with his Majesty's arms.

All the court having taken their places on the seventh; there entered, at six o'clock in the evening, a herald at arms, represented by M. des Bards, dressed after the antique manner, in flame-colour, embroidered with silver, and very well mounted.

He was followed by three pages. The King's (M. d'Artagnan)⁴ preceded the two others, very richly dressed in flame-colour, his Majesty's livery, bearing his lance and shield, whereon sparkled a sun of precious stones, with these words: *Nec cesso, nec erro* (I neither stay, nor stray), alluding to his Majesty's application to the affairs of state and his manner of governing; which was likewise represented by these four verses of the President de Périgny, author of the said device.⁵

Not without reason Heaven and earth behold
So rare an object with the utmost wonder,
Who in his no less hard than glorious course,
Does never take repose, nor ever strays.

The two other pages belonged to the dukes de Saint-Aignan and de Noailles, the former marshal of the camp, the latter judge of the course. The duke de Saint-Aignan's page bore the shield of his device, and was dressed in his livery of silver cloth, enriched with gold, with flesh-coloured and black plumes, and ribands of the same. His device was the bell of a clock, with these words: *De mis golpes mî ruido* (From my strokes (proceeds) my noise).

The duke de Noailles' page was dressed in flame-colour, silver and black, and the rest of the livery in harmony. The device on his shield was an eagle, with these words: *Fidelis et audax* (Faithful and bold).

Four trumpeters and two kettle-drummers followed these pages, dressed in flame-colour and silver, with plumes of the same, and the caparisons of their horses embroidered in the same colours, with very brilliant suns

⁴ It is not easy to say who M. d'Artagnan was, for many of the Montesquiou family bore the name and arms of d'Artagnan. The best known, however, and the one who enjoyed the King's confidence, was the son of Henri de Montesquiou-d'Artagnan and of Jeanne de Gassion (a sister of a marshal of France of the same name), who was called Charles de Bats, *capitaine-lieutenant* of the first company of the King's musketeers. To him was entrusted the guard of Foquet (see Preface to *The Boreas*, Vol. I.), until the latter was condemned. The well-known pamphleteer, Courtilz de Sandraz, wrote in 1700 the *Mémoires de M. d'Artagnan*, after some curious notes left by that nobleman; and the late Alexandre Dumas has partly followed these memoirs in *The Three Musketeers*.

⁵ De Périgny, *président aux enquetes* at the Parliament of Paris, was reader to the King in 1663, teacher to the Dauphin in 1666, and died in 1670. He had a wholly literary office at court. In 1664 he wrote in verse the ballet of the *Amours déguisés*, and at the same time, under the eye of Louis XIV., his *Journal* and *Mémoires*.

upon the bandrols of their trumpets⁶ and the coverings of the kettle-drums.

The duke de Saint-Aignan, marshal of the camp, came after them, wearing, in the Greek fashion, a cuirass of silver-cloth, covered with little scales of gold, as was also the lower part of his cloak;⁷ his helmet was adorned with a dragon and a great number of white feathers, mixed with flesh-coloured and black ones. He rode a white horse, caparisoned in the same fashion, and represented Guido, the savage.

Madrigal for the duke de Saint-Aignan, representing Guido, the savage.

Those combats I fought in the dang'rous isle,
When I so many warriors overcame,
Followed by battles of an am'rous kind,
Showed what my strength as well as heart could do.
My well-known force in lawful frays displayed,
Or in forbidden fields exerted,
Proclaim it, for my glory, at both poles;
None, during war, deals more or better strokes.

For the same.

Singly against ten warriors and ten maids,
I am engaged in two peculiar contests.
If I with honour leave this twofold field,
Methinks I'm then a most terrific warrior.⁸

Eight trumpeters and eight kettle-drummers, dressed like the first, walked behind the marshal of the camp.

The King, representing Rogero, followed them upon one of the finest horses in the world, of which the flame-coloured trappings shone with gold, silver, and precious stones. His Majesty was armed in the Greek fashion, as were all those of his troop, and wore a cuirass of silver plates, covered with a rich embroidery of gold and diamonds. His carriage and whole action were worthy of his rank; his helmet, entirely covered with flame-coloured plumes, looked incomparably beautiful; never did a more free or warlike air raise a mortal so much above other men.⁹

⁶ According to Ash's "Dictionary of the English Language," London, 1775, a bandrol is "a little flag or streamer, the fringed flag hung on to a trumpet."

⁷ In the original, *son bas de saie*, translated by my predecessors as "his silk stockings," in mistake for *bas de soie*.

⁸ Francois de Beauvillier, first duke de Saint Aignan, born in 1610, was peer of France, gentleman of the King's chamber, and lieutenant-general. His county had been erected into a *duché-prairie* in December, 1663. He was a lover of literature, a patron of Molière, a member of the French Academy, and died in 1679.—Guido, the savage, is, in Ariosto, a son of Constantia and Amon, and a younger brother of Rinaldo. Being wrecked on the coast of the Amazons, he was doomed to fight their ten male champions, and having killed them all, was obliged to marry ten amazons; hence the allusion. At last he succeeds in escaping with his favourite wife Aleria, and joins the army of Charlemagne.—These verses and the following were written by Benserade.

⁹ Rogero, the brother of Marphisa, was, on the death of his mother, Galaciella, nursed by a lioness. Brought up by Atlantes, the magician, who gave him a shield of such dazzling splendour that every one quailed who set eyes on it, and which shield he threw into a well, he deserted from the Moorish army, was baptized, married Bradamant, Charlemagne's niece, and became King of Bulgaria.—I wish to draw attention to the official flatteries about Louis le Grand's "carriage," "action," and "air;" even his horse and helmet come in for their share.

Sonnet for the King, representing Rogero.

What shape, what carriage this bold conqu'ror has,
 His person dazzles each beholder's eye;
 And though by his high post he is distinguished,
 Yet something greater sparkles in his mien,
 Clearly his brow his future fate foretells
 His virtue outshines all his ancestors!
 They are forgotten. If he continues so,
 He'll leave them far, yea very far, behind.
 His generous heart delights to employ its time,
 To act for others and not for himself,
 In this his power is chiefly occupied,
 All ancient heroes pale compared to him,
 Honour's his sole aim; he only draws
 The sword for other int'rests than his own.

The duke de Noailles, judge of the lists, by the name of Ogier the Dane,¹⁰ marched after the King, wearing flame-colour and black underneath a rich embroidery of silver; his plumes, as well as the rest of his equipage, were of the same livery.

For the Duke de Noailles, judge of the lists, representing Ogier the Dane.

The only business of this paladine
 Is well to serve the greatest king on earth,
 As he who judges well must act as well,
 Methinks none from his sentence will appeal.

The duke de Guise and the count d'Armagnac went after him. The former, under the name of Aquilant the black,¹¹ wore a black dress embroidered with gold and jet; his horse and his lance being matched in the same colours. The count, representing Gryphon the white,¹² wore on a dress of silver cloth several rubies, and rode on a white horse caparisoned in the same colour.

For the duke de Guise, representing Aquilant the black.

Night has its beauties, and so has the day;
 Black is my colour, and I always loved it.
 But if obscurity does suit my love,
 'T has not extended to my well-known fame.

¹⁰ Ogier the Dane, a paladin, married Ermellina, the daughter of Namus, duke of Bavaria, of whom was born Dudon.—Anne de Noailles, was the first duke, his county, d'Ayen, having been erected into a *duché-pairie* in 1663. He was first captain of the king's life-guards, lieutenant-general of Auvergne, and had married in 1646 Louise Boyer, *dame d'atours* of the Queen Anne of Austria. He died in 1678. Mad. de Sevigné's letters are filled with details about him and his family.

¹¹ Aquilant, a knight in Charlemagne's army, always wore black armor. Whilst Martano was strutting about in Gryphon's white armour, he met Aquilant, who took him prisoner to Damascus.—The duke de Guise, Henri de Lorraine, second of that name, peer and grand chamberlain of France, was born in 1614, and died twenty days after the fetes of the *Isle Enchantée*, on the 2d of June 1664. He had been one of the first patrons of Molière, when the latter acted at the *Illustre Théâtre* in 1645. This prince, who had attempted rashly to become King of Naples, in 1647, died unmarried.

¹² Gryphon, a brother of Aquilant, ever wearing white armour, overthrew the eight champions of the King of Damascus. Whilst asleep Martano stole Gryphon's armour, and he was obliged to put on the coward's; hence he was hooted and jostled by the crowd. At last everything is discovered, and the right man is put in the right place.—Louis de Lorraine count d'Armagnac, son of Henri de Lorraine, Count d'Harcourt, was *grand écuyer* of France, *sénéchal* of Bourgogne, and governor of Anjou.

For the count d'Armagnac, representing Gryphon the white.

Behold what candour Heaven has placed in me ;
Thus no fair maid by me shall be deceived ;
When it is time to attack the enemy
My sword will keep my colour stainless white.

The dukes de Foix and de Coaslin appeared afterwards, dressed, the one in flesh-colour, with gold and silver, and the other in green, with white and silver ; their livery and horses were worthy the rest of their equipage.

For the duke de Foix, representing Rinaldo.¹³

He bears a glorious name, is young and sage,
To speak the truth he lief mounts very high ;
What great good fortune, at so young an age
To have such fire as well as so much calmness.

For the duke de Coaslin, representing Dudo.¹⁴

None can too far in glory's course engage,
Though seven kings I were to conquer bravely,
And see them subject to Rogero's power,
Yet e'en this exploit would not content me.

After them marched the Count de Lude and the Prince de Marsillac, the former dressed in flesh-colour and white, and the other in yellow, white and black, enriched with silver embroidery, their livery of the same, and very well mounted.

For the count de Lude, representing Astolpho.¹⁵

Of all the paladines this world contains,
No knight more prone to love was ever seen.
Always in fresh adventures he'll engage,
And ever smitten by some youthful fay.

For the Prince de Marsillac, representing Brandimart.¹⁶

My vows will be content, my wishes crowned,
My fortune at its utmost height arriv'd,
When, lovely Flordelice, my zeal you know,
Indelibly within my heart imprest.

¹³ Rinaldo, in Ariosto's poem, was the son of the fourth marquis of Este, the rival of his cousin Orlando for the love of Angelica, who detested him, and the leader of a corps of Scotch and English auxiliaries in Charlemagne's army.—Gaston-Jean-Baptiste de Foix and de Candale, peer of France, eldest son of the countess de Fleix, was called Duke de Foix, because his county of Randan had been raised by the King into a *duché-pairie*. He died in 1665, at the age of twenty-seven, and his brother and heir, Henri Francois de Foix, then took the title.

¹⁴ Dudo was the admiral commanding the fleet of Orlando and Astolpho,—Armand du Cambout, duke de Coaslin, peer of France, *chevalier des ordres du roi*, lieutenant general, had, only in the beginning of 1664, been made a duke and peer ; he was formerly a marquis.

¹⁵ Astolpho, an English duke, the son of Otho, joined Charlemagne against the Saracens ; he was carried upon the back of a whale to the island of Alcina, who soon tired of him and changed him into a myrtle. His descent into the infernal regions, and his flight to the moon, are among the best parts of the *Orlando Furioso*.—Henri de Daillon, count de Lude, first gentleman of the King's chamber, grand master of the artillery, captain of the castles of St. Germain and Versailles, was made duke and peer in 1675, and died without issue in 1685. He is often mentioned in Mad. de Sevigné's letters.

¹⁶ The Prince de Marsillac was Francois de la Rochefoucauld, eighth of that name, and son of the famous duke de la Rochefoucauld, author of the *Maxims*.

The marquises de Villequier and de Soyecourt followed. One wore blue and silver, the other blue, white, and black, with gold and silver; their plumes and the harness of their horses were of the same colour, and equally rich.

For the Marquis de Villequier, representing Richardetto.¹⁷

No one, like me, with gallantry could quit
An intrigue where, no doubt, some skill was greatly needed,
No one deceived his fair so pleasantly, methinks,
While all the time remaining faithful to her.

For the Marquis de Soyecourt, representing Oliviero.¹⁸

Behold the honour of the age, compared to whom
E'en giants and ourselves are ordinary men;
This valiant knight, prepared for all that come,
Has aye his lance quite ready for the tilts.

The marquises d'Humières and de la Vallière followed them. The first wore flesh-colour and silver, and the other gridelin,¹⁹ white, and silver; their whole livery being the richest and best matched in the world.

For the Marquis d'Humières, representing Ariodantes.²⁰

Fevered by love, I tremble in my fit,
And without boast elsewhere I ne'er did tremble;
Handsome young Ginevra is the only fair
Young charmer to whose laws I bow.

For the Marquis de la Vallière, representing Zerbino.²¹

Whate'er grand feelings glory may inspire
When we are wholly all-absorbed in love;
To die in the arms of her whom we admire,
Methinks is of all deaths the one most pleasant.

He was born in 1639 and died in 1714. He married, in 1659, his cousin, Jeanne Charlotte du Plessis Liancourt, daughter of the Count de la Roche-Guyon.—Brandimart, one of the bravest knights in Charlemagne's army, was slain by Gradasso, King of Sericana; he was the brother-in-law of Orlando, and the lover of Flordelice, daughter of Dolistone. According to Ariosto (*Orlando Furioso*) Cant. xlii., St. 14), he thus spoke to Orlando, when dying:—"Ne men ti raccomando la mio Fiordi. . . Ma der non puote ligi: e qui finio." Rendered by Rose in his translation:—"Nor recommend to thee less warmly my—"—Flordelice would, but could not, say—and died.

¹⁷ Richardetto was the son of Aymon and brother of Bradamant, and was mistaken by Flordespine for his sister Bradamant. This rather free story may be read in the twenty-fifth canto of the *Orlando Furioso*.—Louis Marie-Victor d'Aumont, marquis de Villequier, eldest son of the duke d'Aumont, born in 1632, was first gentleman of the King's chamber. At his father's death, in 1669 he became duke, peer, and marshal of France.

¹⁸ Oliverio of Burgundy was a famous paladin, son of Rinieri of Vienna, brother of Alda, and father of Gryphon and Aquilant. The descriptive verses contain an allusion to the Marquis de Soyecourt's prowess, of which the curious may find the details in the *chronique scandaleuse* of Louis XIV.'s age.—Maximilien Antoine de Belleforière, marquis de Soyecourt or Saucourt, was grand master of the King's wardrobe, and became afterwards master of the hunt to the King: he died in 1679. He is the Dorante of *The Bores* (see Introductory Notice, Vol. I).

¹⁹ According to several old dictionaries, "gridelin" is a colour mixed of white and red.

²⁰ Ariodantes, an Italian knight at the court of Scotland, duke of Albany, married Ginevra, the daughter of that king.—Louis de Crevant, fourth of that name, marquis d'Humières, lieutenant-general, was made a duke and peer in 1688, and at the same time was appointed marshal of France and grand master of the artillery. Madame de Sévigné mentions his name several times in her letters.

²¹ Zerbino, duke of Ross-shire, was the son of the King of Scotland, and the intimate friend of Orlando. He died in the arms of the sorrowing Isabel.

Monsieur the Duke²² went alone, having for his livery flame-colour, white and silver; a great number of diamonds were fastened to the magnificent embroidery with which his cuirass and the lower part of his cloak were covered; his helmet, and the harness of his horse being likewise adorned with them.

*For Monsieur the Duke, representing Orlando.*²³

Fame will in distant lands Orlando's name make known,
 Glory shall ne'er depart from him;
 Descended from a race that e'er desires
 To show its valour when war is proclaim'd.
 In him, to speak unvarnished truth,
 Flows the pure blood of Charlemagne.²⁴

A car, eighteen feet high, twenty-four long, and fifteen wide, appeared, afterwards shining with gold and divers colours. It represented the chariot of Apollo, in whose honour the Pythian games were formerly celebrated, which those knights intended to imitate in their lists and dresses. The god, radiant with light, was seated on the top of the car, having at his feet the four ages, distinguished by rich habits, and by what they bore in their hands.

The golden Age, adorned with that precious metal, was also decked with different flowers, one of the principal ornaments of that happy age. The silver and brass Ages had also their distinguishing marks. The iron Age was represented by a warrior of terrible aspect, holding his sword in one hand, and his buckler in the other.

Several other large figures in relief adorned the sides of the magnificent chariot. The celestial monsters, the serpent Python, Daphne, Hyacinth, and the other figures which are suitable to Apollo, with an Atlas bearing the globe, were also elegantly carved upon it. Time, represented by M. Millet,²⁵ with his scythe, his wings, and that decrepitude in which he is always depicted, was the coachman. The car was drawn by four horses, of uncommon size and beauty, abreast, covered with large housings, ornamented with gold-worked suns.

The twelve hours of the day, and the twelve signs of the Zodiac, splendidly dressed, as the poets described them, walked in two files on both sides of the chariot. All the knights' pages followed it in pairs, after the duke's, very neatly dressed in their liveries, with a great many plumes, bearing their master's lances, and the shields with their devices.

The Duke de Guise, representing Aquilant the black, having for his device a lion sleeping, with these words *Et quiescente pavescent* (They fear me even when asleep).

The count d'Armagnac, representing Gryphon the white, having for his device an ermine, with these words: *Ex candore decus* (My beauty proceeds from my whiteness).

The duke de Foix, representing Rinaldo, having for his device a ship

²² The "Duke" was the name given to the duke of Enghien, the son of the Prince de Condé.

²³ Orlando was lord of Anglanc, and through his mother, a nephew of Charlemagne. Although a married man, he fell in love with Angelica, daughter of the infidel king of Cathay; but she fled with Medoro, the Moor, to India; whereupon Orlando became mad, or rather lost his wits, which were deposited in the moon. Astolpho went to fetch them in Elijah's chariot, and St. John gave them to him in an urn. Orlando recovers his wits by sniffing at the urn.

²⁴ An allusion to the Prince de Condé being a Bourbon.

²⁵ M. Millet was the coachman in ordinary to Louis XIV., and celebrated for his skill.

on the sea, with these words: *Longe levis aura feret* (A slight breeze will carry it far).

The duke de Coaslin, representing Dudo, having for his device a sun and a sun-flower, with these words: *Splendor ab obsequio* (Its splendour arises from its obedience).²⁶

The count de Lude, representing Astolphus, having for his device a cypher in the form of a knot, with these words: *Non fia mai sciolto* (It shall never be broken).

The prince de Marsillac, representing Brandimart, having for his device a watch in relief, of which all the springs were visible, with these words: *Chieto fuor, commoto dentro* (Calm without, agitated within).

The marquis de Villequier, representing Richardetto, having for his device an eagle soaring before the sun, with these words: *Uni militat astro* (He fights for a single star).²⁷

The marquis de Soyecourt, representing Oliviero, having for his device Hercules' club, with these words: *Vix æquat fama labores* (his fame is scarce equal to his labours).

The marquis d'Humières, representing Ariodantes, having for his device all sorts of crowns, with these words: *No quiero menos* (Less will not content me).

The marquis de la Vallière, representing Zerbino, having for his device a phoenix on a pile set on fire by the sun, with these words: *Hoc juvat uri* (It is pleasant to be so burnt).²⁸

The Duke, representing Orlando, having for his device a dart, wreathed with laurel, with these words: *Certo ferit* (It strikes surely).

Twenty shepherds, carrying different pieces of the barrier to be set up for the tilting, formed the last troop that entered the lists. They were dressed in short jackets of flame-colour, adorned with silver, and caps of the same.

As soon as these troops entered the camp, they went round it, and, after having paid their obeisance to the queen, they separated, and each took his post. The pages who were in front, the trumpeters and kettle-drummers crossed, and stationed themselves at the wings. The King advancing towards the middle, placed himself opposite to the high canopy; the Duke near his Majesty; the dukes de Saint-Aignan and de Noailles on the right and left; the ten knights in a line on both sides of the chariot; their pages in the same order behind them: the Hours and the signs of the Zodiac as they entered.

When they had thus stopped, a profound silence, which arose from attention and respect, gave Mademoiselle Debrie,²⁹ who represented the Age of Brass, an opportunity to recite these verses, in praise of the Queen addressed to Apollo, represented by M. de la Grange.

THE BRASS AGE (*to Apollo*).

Thou dazzling father of the day, whose power
Does by its various aspects give us birth;

²⁶ These words were flattering to Louis XIV., whose device was the sun.

²⁷ The same remark can be applied to the marquis de Villequier's device.

²⁸ These words were very ingenious, because the sun was the device of Louis XIV., the lover of Mademoiselle de la Vallière. The marquis, her brother, could therefore not do less than delicately allude to it by stating that "it is pleasant to be burnt by the sun." The noble Marquis became duke de la Vallière and peer in 1688, after his sister had taken her vows in the Carmelite convent.

²⁹ For the actors and actresses of Molière's troupe, see Introductory Notice to *The Impromptu of Versailles*, Vol. I.

Hope of the earth, and ornament of Heaven,
 Thou fairest and most necessary god ;
 Thou, whose activity and sovereign bounty,
 In every place makes itself seen and felt,
 Say by what destiny, or what new choice,
 Thy games are solemnized on Gallia's shores.³⁰

APOLLO.

If all th' address, the glory, valour, merit,
 Which made Greece shine, are found on these blest shores,
 Then justly hither are those games transferred,
 Which, to my honour, earth has consecrated.

I ever did delight to pour on France
 The balmy influence of my gentle rays ;
 But the bright dame whom Hymen there enthrones,
 Makes me for her disdain all other realms.

Since for the wide creation's good so long
 I've made the boundless tour of seas and earth
 I ne'er saw ought so worthy of my fires,
 Such noble blood, so generous a heart,
 Never such lustre with such innocence,
 Never such youth with so much sound discretion ;
 Never such grandeur with such condescension,
 Never such wisdom joined to so much beauty.

The thousand various climates which are ruled
 By all those demi-gods from whom she springs,
 Led by their own devoir and her high merit,
 United, will one day confess her power.

Whatever grandeur France or Spain might boast,
 The rights of Charles the Fifth, and Charlemagne,
 Auspiciously transmitted in her blood,
 Will to her throne subject the universe :
 But a yet greater title, nobler lot,
 Which lifts her higher, and which charms her more,
 A name which in itself all names outweighs,
 Is that of consort to the mighty Louis.

SILVER AGE.

By what unjust decree has fate produced,
 A star so kindly in the age of iron ?

GOLDEN AGE.

Ah ! Do not murmur at the gods' appointment.
 This age which has the hate of Heav'n deserv'd,
 Instead of growing proud with that rare blessing,
 Ought thence to augurate its approaching ruin,
 And think a virtue which it can't corrupt,
 Comes rather to destroy than to ennoble it.

As soon as she appeared on this blest earth,
 She chased away the furious raging war ;
 From that same day labour unwearied hands
 To render happy all humanity.
 See by what hidden springs a Hero strives,
 To banish from a barbarous age its horrors,
 And kindly to assist my resurrection,
 With all those joys which innocence desires.

IRON AGE.

I know what enemies have planned my ruin,
 Their plots are known, their stratagems are traced ;
 But yet my courage is not so far sunk . . .

³⁰ The president de Périgny is the author of the following verses, as well as those pronounced by the other Ages, by Apollo, the Seasons, Diana, and Pan. I have taken them from some older translations and corrected and modified them, when necessary.

APOLLO.

Should all hell's monsters join in thy defence,
 Feeble and vain would their resistance prove
 Against such grandeur and against such virtue :
 Long with thy galling yoke the world oppress
 Shall by thy flight a happier lot enjoy.
 'Tis time that thou give way to the high law
 Which an august and mighty Queen imposes.
 It is time to yield to the illustrious labours
 Of a great King, favoured by Heaven and Earth ;
 But here too long this quarrel made me stay ;
 These lists invite to much more gentle combats,
 Let us ope them just now, and laurels wreath
 To bind the brows of our most famous warriors.

After all these verses were spoken, the running at the ring began ; wherein, after they had admired the King's skill and gracefulness in that exercise, as in all others, and after several fine courses of all these knights, the duke de Guise, the marquises de Soyecourt and de la Vallière remained the last. The last bore off the prize, which was a golden sword enriched with diamonds, with very valuable buckles for the belt, which the Queen-mother gave, and wherewith she honoured him with her own hand.

They began their running in such good time, that just when it was finished, darkness came on ; when a great number of lights illuminated this beautiful place, and thirty-four musicians, who were to precede the Seasons entered very well dressed, and performed the most pleasant music in the world.

Whilst the Seasons were taking up the delicious viands they had to carry for the magnificent entertainment of their Majesties, the twelve signs of the Zodiac and the four Seasons danced in the ring one of the finest *entrées* ever seen.

Spring, represented by Mademoiselle Duparc, afterwards appeared on a Spanish horse. She showed the skill of a man, as well as womanly attractions. Her dress was green with silver embroidery, adorned with flowers.

M. Duparc, who represented Summer, followed upon an elephant covered with rich housings.

Next came M. de la Thorillière, representing Autumn, as splendidly dressed, and mounted on a camel.

Winter, represented by M. Béjart, followed on a bear.

Forty-eight persons followed them, carrying on their heads large basins for the lunch.

The first twelve, covered with flowers, carried, like gardeners, baskets painted green and silver, containing a great many china dishes, so full of preserves and many other delicious things of the season, that they bent beneath the agreeable load.

Twelve others, like reapers, clothed in garments which suited their profession, but very rich, carried basins of that incarnadine colour which may be observed at sun-rise, and followed Summer.

Twelve others, dressed like vine-dressers, were covered with vine-leaves, and bunches of grapes, and bore in baskets of filemot colour,³¹ full of little basins of the same, various other fruits and preserves. These followed Autumn.

The last twelve were old men, nearly frozen to death, whose furs and

³¹ The original has *feuille-morte*, the colour of a dead leaf.

gait showed how they felt the inclemency of the weather, as well as their weakness, bearing, in basins covered with ice and snow so well imitated that they might have been taken for the very things they were intended to represent, that which was to contribute to the collation. These followed Winter.

Fourteen musicians preceded the two divinities Pan and Diana, with an agreeable harmony of flutes and bagpipes.

Pan and Diana then appeared upon a very ingenious carriage, shaped like a little mountain or rock, shaded by several trees, and so wonderfully constructed, that the machinery which held it in the air, and put it in motion, could not be perceived.

Twenty other persons followed, carrying viands, the produce of Pan's menagerie and of Diana's chase.

Eighteen pages of the King, very richly clad, who were to wait upon the ladies at table, came last. The whole troop then placed themselves in order. Pan, Diana, and the Seasons presented themselves before the Queen, whilst Spring first, and the others afterwards, addressed her in the following words :

SPRING (*to the Queen*).

Of all the new-born flowers that deck my gardens,
Scorning the jessamine, the pinks and roses,
These lilies I have chosen to pay my tribute,
Which in your earliest years you so much cherished.
Louis has made them shine from east to west,
Whilst the charmed world at once respects and fears them,
But still their reign's more soft and powerful too,
When, brilliant-like, they beam on your complexion.

SUMMER.

Seized with too hasty a surprise, I bring
A slender ornament to grace this feast ;
Yet know, before my season's passed away,
Your warriors in the fields of Thrace,
Shall reap an ample crop of laurels.

AUTUMN.

The Spring, proud of the beauty of those flowers
Which to his lot have fortunately fallen,
Thinks to have all th' advantage of this feast,
And quite obscure us by his lively colours.
But you, you matchless Princess, well remember
What precious fruit my season has produced,
Which in your house does one day mean to prove
The darling and the blessing of mankind.³²

WINTER.

The snow and icicles I hither bring,
Are viands far from being rare or precious ;
But they're most necessary in a feast,
Where with their killing eyes, a thousand objects,
Replete with charms, so many flames create.

³² An allusion to the Dauphin, born on the 1st of November, 1661. What Summer has said before about the " ample crop of laurels " your warriors shall reap in the fields of Thrace, I cannot elucidate, because in 1664 there was neither war nor rumours of war. The last line Pan states, " 'Tis to your charms that happiness we owe " refers to the Peace of the Pyrenees in 1659, and the subsequent marriage of Louis XIV. with Maria Theresa of Spain, in 1660.

DIANA (*to the Queen*).

Our woods, our rocks, our mountains, all our hunters,
And my companions who have to me always
Paid sovereign honours, since they have beheld
Your presence here, will know me now no more;
And laden with their presents, come with me
To bring this tribute to you, as a mark
Of their allegiance.
The swift inhabitants of those blessed groves,
Make it their choice to fall into your nets,
And only wish to perish by your hands.
Love, whose address and countenance you wear,
Alone with you this wondrous secret shares.

PAN.

Be not surprised, young deity, that we
In this famed festival approach to offer
The choice of what our pastures can bestow.
For if our flocks their herbage taste in peace,
'Tis to your charms that happiness we owe.

After these verses had been spoken, a great table was seen, shaped like a half moon, concave on the side on which they were to serve, and adorned with flowers on the convex side.

Thirty-six violin players, very well dressed, were behind on a little stage, whilst Messieurs de la Marche and Parfait, father, brother, and son, controllers-general, by the names of Plenty, Joy, Cleanliness, and Good-cheer, caused the aforesaid table to be covered by Pleasures, Sports, Smiles, and Delights.

Their Majesties sat down in the following order, which prevented all the confusion that might have arisen about precedence.

The Queen-mother³³ was seated in the middle of the table, and had at her right hand—The King, Mademoiselle d'Alençon,³⁴ Madame la Princesse,³⁵ Mademoiselle d'Elbeuf,³⁶ Madame de Béthune,³⁷ Madame la duchess de Créqui,³⁸ Monsieur,³⁹ Madame la duchesse de Saint-Aignan,⁴⁰

³³ See Vol. I., page 402, note 1.

³⁴ Mademoiselle d'Alençon, daughter of Gaston of France, duke of Orleans, and of Marguerite de Lorraine, was born in 1646, married, in 1667, Louis Joseph de Lorraine, duke of Guise, and died in 1696.

³⁵ Madame la Princesse was the name given at court to Claire-Clémence de Maille, marchioness of Brézé, who had married, in 1641, Louis II., prince de Condé, called the Grand Condé. Since the sixteenth century, the princes of Condé were called *Monsieur le Prince*.

³⁶ Mademoiselle d'Elbeuf, Anne Elisabeth de Lorraine, was the daughter of Charles de Lorraine, third of that name, duke d'Elbeuf, and of his first wife, Anne Elisabeth de Lannoi, widow of the count de la Roche-Guyon. Mademoiselle d'Elbeuf, born in 1649, married, in 1669, Charles Henri de Lorraine, count de Vaudemont.

³⁷ Anne Marie de Beauvillier was the wife of Hippolyte de Béthune, count de Selles and marquis de Cabris, and *dame d'atour* to the queen. She died in 1688, a widow, at the age of seventy-eight years.

³⁸ Armande de Saint-Gelais, a daughter of the lord de Lansac, marquis de Balon, was the wife of Charles III., duke de Créqui, peer of France, prince de Poix, first gentleman of the chamber to the King, and governor of Paris.

³⁹ Monsieur was the title of the eldest brother of the king. He married, first, Henrietta of England, a sister of Charles II., and, after her death (1670), Charlotte Elizabeth of Bavaria. He was said to be a good general, and gained a brilliant victory over the Prince of Orange at Cassel, in 1676, which made Louis XIV. so jealous that he never gave his brother any other military command. He died suddenly at Saint-Cloud in 1701.

⁴⁰ Madame la duchesse de Saint-Aignan, whose maiden name was Antoinette

Madame *la maréchale du Plessis*,⁴¹ Madame *la maréchale d'Etampes*,⁴² Madame *de Gourdon*,⁴³ Madame *de Montespan*,⁴⁴ Madam *d'Humières*,⁴⁵ Mademoiselle *de Brancas*,⁴⁶ Madame *d'Armagnac*,⁴⁷ Madame *la comtesse de Soissons*,⁴⁸ Madame *la princesse de Bade*,⁴⁹ Mademoiselle *de Grancey*.⁵⁰
On the other side were seated the *Queen*,⁵¹ Madame *de Carignan*,⁵²

Servien, was the first wife of Francois de Beauvillier, duke of Saint-Aignan, whom she married in 1633. She died in 1680, and her husband married again six months after her death. Madame de Sévigné speaks of this in her letters.

⁴¹ Colombe de Charron was the wife of César de Choiseul, count, and afterwards, duke of Plessis-Praslin, marshal of France, who died in 1675, seventy-eight years old. This lady, known as the *maréchale du Plessis*, had great influence at court, because her husband had been governor of Philip of France, duke of Orleans.

⁴² Madame *la maréchale d'Etampes*, the eldest daughter of the marquis de Praslin, marshal of France, and whose maiden name was Catherine Blance de Choiseul, had married, in 1610, Jacques d'Etampes, called the marshal de la Ferté d'Imbault, who died in 1668, seventy-eight years old. She was nearly as old as her husband, was called at court *la maréchale d'Etampes*, and was first maid of honour to Henrietta of England, duchess of Orleans.

⁴³ Madame de Gourdon belonged to the household of Madame, duchess of Orleans, after whose death she was falsely accused of having poisoned her.

⁴⁴ Francoise Athénais de Rochechouart, daughter of Gabriel de Rochechouart, duke of Mortemart, married, in 1663, Henri Louis de Pardaillan de Gondrin, marquis de Montespan, and became soon after this *dame du palais* to the queen. She was first the confidante, and afterwards the rival, of Mademoiselle de la Vallière. In 1668, Madame de Montespan became the mistress of the King, and lived long enough "to point a moral and adorn a tale."

⁴⁵ Louise Antoinette Thérèse de la Chatre, daughter of Edme de la Chatre, count of Nancel, married, in 1653, Louis de Crevant, marquis d'Humières, who was lieutenant-general, and became, in 1668, marshal of France. Madame de Sévigné mentions him in her letters.

⁴⁶ Mademoiselle de Brancas, according to the researches of the eminent French *littérateur*, Paul Lacroix, made kindly and specially for this edition, is Marie de Brancas, daughter of count Charles de Brancas, who married, in 1667, Alphonse-Henri-Charles de Lorraine, prince d'Harcourt, and became then *dame du palais*.

⁴⁷ Madame d'Armagnac, whose maiden name was Marguerite-Phillipe de Cambout, was the widow of Antoine de l'Age, duke of Puy-Laurens, and had married again Henri de Lorraine, count d'Armagnac, second son of Charles de Lorraine, first of that name, duke d'Elbeuf. She died in 1674.

⁴⁸ Madame *la comtesse de Soissons*, Olympe Mancini, the niece of Cardinal Mazarin, was born at Rome in 1640. She inspired a great passion in Louis XIV. when he was very young, but she married, in 1657, the count de Soissons. In 1664, she was made grand-mistress of the household of the queen, and was exiled from the court the following year, on account of an intrigue which she had planned against Mademoiselle de la Vallière, whom she could never forgive for having become mistress to the King.

⁴⁹ Madame *la Princesse de Bade* was Louise Christine de Savoie, daughter of Thomas de Savoie, prince de Carignan, and of Marie de Bourbon-Soissons. She married, in 1655, Ferdinand Maximilien, marquis of Baden, who left her and her son behind in France, five years after his marriage. She was called *princesse de Bade*, as being a daughter of the prince of Carignan.

⁵⁰ Mademoiselle de Grancey, the eldest daughter of Jacques Rouxel, count de Grancey, marshal of France, was afterwards known as countess de Grancey.

⁵¹ Maria Theresa of Austria, born at the Escorial, in Spain, in 1638, daughter of Philip IV., King of Spain, and of Elizabeth of France, married Louis XIV., in 1660, and suffered all her life long, her husband's marital infidelities without complaining. She was appointed regentess in 1672, when the King started for the Dutch wars, and died in 1683. Of her six children, only one survived her.

⁵² Madame de Carignan's name was Marie de Bourbon, daughter of Charles, count de Soissons. She had married, in 1624, Thomas Francois de Savoie, prince de Carignan, who died in 1656. She returned then to the court of France, and died in 1692. Her eldest son continued the branch of the princes of Carignan; her second son, Eugène Maurice, the branch of the Soissons.

Madame de Fleix,⁵³ Madame la duchesse de Foix,⁵⁴ Madame de Brancas,⁵⁵ Madame de Froulay,⁵⁶ Madame la duchesse de Navailles,⁵⁷ Mademoiselle d'Ardennes,⁵⁸ Mademoiselle de Coetlogon,⁵⁹ Madame de Crussol,⁶⁰ Madame de Montausier,⁶¹ Madame,⁶² Madame la princesse Bénédicte,⁶³ Madame la Duchesse,⁶⁴ Madame de Rouvroy,⁶⁵ Mademoiselle de la Mothe,⁶⁶ Madame Marsé,⁶⁷ Mademoiselle de la Vallière,⁶⁸ Mademoiselle d'Ar-

⁵³ Marie-Claire de Baufremont, first lady of honour to the Queen Anne of Austria, married, in 1637, Jean-Baptiste-Gaston de Foix, count de Fleix, after whose death, in 1646, she was always called countess de Fleix. She was held in great consideration by Louis XIV.

⁵⁴ There was no duchess de Foix in 1664; but there was a countess of Foix, who took the title of duchesse,—a title which no one disputed with her. Her maiden name was Madeleine Charlotte d'Ailli d'Albert, daughter of Henri-Louis, duke de Chaulnes, and she was married to Gaston-Jean-Baptiste de Foix et de Candale, whom she preceded to the tomb by four months.

⁵⁵ It is not easy to state exactly who was the real Madame de Brancas, for at that time there were two branches of the family of Brancas, the Forcalquier-Céreste and the Brancas-Villars, who both figured at the entertainments given by Louis XIV. We believe, however, that the lady mentioned here was Suzanne Garnier, wife of Charles, count de Brancas, uncle and father-in-law of Louis de Brancas, duke de Villars.

⁵⁶ Madame de Froulay, widow of Charles, count de Froulay, *grand-maréchal des logis* of the King, was a very intriguing busybody, who at last rendered herself obnoxious to Louis XIV.

⁵⁷ Madame la duchesse de Navailles was the daughter of Charles de Beauveau, count de Neuillan, and married, in 1651, Philippe de Montault-Bénac, duc de Navailles, peer and marshal of France. She was one of the ladies-in-waiting to the Queen Anne of Austria.

⁵⁸ Mademoiselle d'Ardennes belonged certainly to the family of the Rommillés in Brittany, who were lords d'Ardennes. She was most likely maid of honour to the Queen.

⁵⁹ Mademoiselle Louise Philippe de Coetlogon, maid of honour to the Queen, was afterwards married to the marquis de Cavoye.

⁶⁰ Madame de Crussol was married, March 16th, 1664, to Emmanuel de Crussol, a son of the duke d'Uzes; she was the only daughter of the duke de Montausier, and her maiden name was Julie Marie de Sainte Maure.

⁶¹ Madame de Montausier, the celebrated Julie of the hotel Rambouillet, whose real name was Julie Lucie d'Angennes, marchioness of Rambouillet and Pisani, governess of the dauphin, and lady of honour to the Queen.

⁶² For Madame, see Introductory Notice to *The School for Wives*, Vol. I.

⁶³ Madame la princesse Bénédicte belonged most probably to some branch of the house of France. I have, however, not been able to discover who she was.

⁶⁴ Madame la Duchesse had been, for a year (1663), the wife of Henry-Jules de Bourbon, duke d'Enghein, and was called, according to custom, Madame la Duchesse. She was the daughter of Edward of Bavaria, palatine of the Rhine.

⁶⁵ Madame de Rouvroy was unmarried in 1664, when the fetes at Versailles were given, and belonged to the family of the duke of St. Simon. She was maid of honour to the Queen, and married the count de St. Vallier in 1675. Mad. de Sévigné speaks of her and her mother in her letters.

⁶⁶ Mademoiselle de la Mothe, daughter of the marshal Antoine de la Mothe, marquis d'Houdancourt, was maid of honour to the Queen, and afterwards duchess de la Vieuville.

⁶⁷ Madame de Marsé. I have been unable to discover who this lady was; most likely a maid of honour or lady in waiting on the Queen. In Burgundy there was a lordship of Marzé, belonging to the noble family of Nanton.

⁶⁸ Mademoiselle Louise Francoise de La Baume Le Blanc de la Vallière, the king's present mistress, had, only five months before, been confined of her first child, and sought, afterwards, by a cloistral penance of twenty years, to redeem the mistake of having loved that coarse and egotistical voluptuary, Louis XIV. She was born at Tours in 1644, and was maid of honour to Madame in 1664. In 1667, the property of La Vallière was made a *duché-pairie* in favour of Mademoiselle de la Vallière, and of her child, *fille légitimée de France*, who afterwards became princess de Conti. Charles II., King of England, who liked to imitate Louis XIV. as

tigny,⁶⁹ *Mademoiselle du Bellay*,⁷⁰ *Mademoiselle de Dampierre*,⁷¹ *Mademoiselle de Fienness*.⁷²

The splendour of this collation surpasses all that could be written of it, as well for its abundance, as for the delicacy of the things that were served up. It formed, likewise, the finest object for the gratification of the senses; for, in the night-time, near the verdure of those palisades, a great number of candlesticks painted green and silver, each of them holding twenty-four tapers, and two hundred flambeaux of white wax, held by as many masked persons, gave a light almost as great as, and more agreeable than, daylight. All the knights, with their helmets covered with plumes of different colours, and their tilting dresses, leaned on the barriers; and the great number of officers, richly clad who waited at table, enhanced its beauty, and rendered that ring an enchanted place; whence, after the collation, their Majesties and all the court went out by a portico opposite the lists, and in a great number of very comfortable carriages, took their way to the castle.

The Second Day of the Pleasures of the Enchanted Island.

On the evening of the second day, their Majesties went to another ring, surrounded by palisades like the former, and in the same line still projecting towards the lake, where the palace of Alcina was supposed to be built.

The plan of this second feast was that Rogero and the knights of his troop, after having performed wonders in the lists, which by order of the fair magician had been held in honour of the Queen, should continue in the same manner, the following diversion; and that the floating island not having left the French shore, they might afford her Majesty the pleasure of a comedy, of which the scene was laid in Elis.

The King then caused, with surprising expedition, the whole ring to be covered with cloths, shaped like a dome, to protect against the wind the great number of flambeaux and wax lights which were to light up the theatre, of which the decorations were very pleasing. They then repre-

well as he could, bestowed a similar reward upon Barbara Villiers, countess of Castlemain, for similar services rendered (see Introductory Notice to *Love is the Best Doctor*). Louis le Grand appears to have acquired the name of "great," solely on account of his indomitable will, which showed itself above all in a disregard for the feelings of others, in his voracious appetite, in the repeated gratification of his brutal passions, in the number of his mistresses and bastards, in his cravings for swallowing medicine, and finally, in the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and his devotee drivellings, by which he seemed to wish to cheat Heaven, as he had cheated posterity, out of the nickname of "Grand," by a sham assumption of dignity. In justice to Mons. Paul Lacroix, whom I know to entertain other opinions in regard to Louis XIV., I beg to state these remarks on the *Grand Monarque* are mine.

⁶⁹ *Mademoiselle d'Artigny* belonged probably to the family de Guast, who came from the Comtat Venaissin, in which the name and lordship of d'Artigny are found. She was most likely one of the maids of honour to the Queen.

⁷⁰ *Mademoiselle du Bellay*, or rather de Belloy, was probably one of the maids of honour to the queen, and belonged to the ancient and illustrious family of de Belloy, of which a great many representatives were in the King's and Queen's retinue.

⁷¹ *Mademoiselle de Dampierre*, was a maid of honour to the Queen, and afterwards married to Alphonse de Moreuil, first gentleman of the chamber to the Prince de Condé.

⁷² *Mademoiselle de Fienne's* real name was *Mademoiselle de Fruges*; but she took the first title because she belonged to that noble house. She married Henri Garnier, count des Chapelles, governor of Montargis, and would never take the name of her husband. She was maid of honour to the Queen.

sented *The Princess of Elis*,⁷³ as well as six interludes. Whilst the shepherds and shepherdesses were singing and dancing at the end of the sixth interlude, there rose, from underneath the stage, a great tree, on which were sixteen fauns, eight of whom played on the flute, and the others on the violin, with the most agreeable harmony. Thirty violins answered them from the orchestra, as well as six harpsichords and theorbos.

Four shepherds and shepherdesses came and danced a very fine *entrée*,⁷⁴ in which the fauns, who had come down from the tree, mingled from time to time. This whole scene was so grand, so busy, and so agreeable, that no more beautiful ballet was ever seen.

Thus the amusements of this day, which all the court praised no less than those of the preceding, ended most advantageously, every one going away well satisfied, and having great expectations of the sequel of so complete a festival.

The Third Day of the Pleasures of the Enchanted Island.

The more they advanced towards the great round water, representing the lake, on which formerly the palace of Alcina was built, the nearer they came to the end of the amusements of the Enchanted Island, as if it had not been fit that so many valiant knights should remain away any longer in an idleness which would have wronged their glory.

Therefore, always following the first plan, it was pretended that, Heaven having resolved to set free these warriors, Alcina had some forebodings of it, which filled her with terror and uneasiness. She resolved to do all she could to prevent such a misfortune, and to fortify, by all possible means, a place which might secure her entire repose and joy.

Within this round lake, of which the size and shape were extraordinary, was a rock situated in the middle of an island, filled with different animals, as if they would forbid the entry of it.

Two other islands, longer, but not so wide, were on both sides of the first, and all three, as well as the banks of the lake, were so well lit up that there seemed to arise a new day amidst the darkness of the night.

As soon as their Majesties had arrived and taken their places, one of the two islands which were by the sides of the first was wholly filled with violin-players, very well dressed. The opposite island was at the same time filled with trumpeters and kettle-drummers, whose dresses were no less rich.

But what was more surprising was to see Alcina (Mademoiselle Duparc) issue from behind a rock, born by a sea monster of prodigious size. Two of her nymphs, called Celia (Mademoiselle Du Brie) and Dirce (Mademoiselle Molière), followed her; and, placing themselves on each side upon large whales, approached the bank of the lake; while Alcina began to recite the following verses, which her companions answered, and which were in praise of the Queen, mother of the King.

ALCINA, CELIA, DIRCE.

Alcina. You who both share my happy lot,
Come weep with me in this extremity.

Celia. Why such alarms so unexpectedly?
What draws such floods of tears from those bright eyes?

⁷³In the official description of *The Pleasures of the Enchanted Island*, Molière's comedy, *The Princess of Elis*, is placed here. I have printed it at the end of this Introductory Notice.

⁷⁴See Prefatory Memoir, Vol. I.

Alcina. I can't even think to speak on't without trembling.

'Midst the dark horrors of a threatening dream,
A spectre with a hideous voice declared
That hell no longer aids me with its force,
That a celestial power arrests its aid,
And that this day for me shall be the last.
All the malignant influence of the stars,
Which adverse reigned ascendant at my birth,
And all misfortunes which my art had promised,
This dream foreshadowed in such lively colours,
That ceaseless to my waking eyes it offers
Melissa's power and Bradamant's good fortune.
These evils I foresaw, but the dear pleasures,
Which here seemed even to forestal our wishes ;
Our lofty palaces, our fields, our gardens,
The pleasing converse of our dear companions,
Our songs and sports, the concerts of the birds,
The zephyr's fragrant breath, the murmuring waters,
The sweet adventures of our tender loves,
Made me forget those fatal auguries ;
When that dire dream, which still distracts my senses,
With so much fury brought 'em to my mind.
Methinks I see my troops each moment routed,
My guards all slaughtered, and my prisons forced,
A thousand lovers by my art transformed,
Who bent on my destruction full of rage,
Quit, all at once, their trunks and leafy dwellings
To take a righteous vengeance upon me ;
And last methinks I see my dear Rogero
Ready to shake off my despised chains.

Celia. Fear in your breast has gained the upper hand.

You reign sole here ; for you alone they sigh ;
Nought interrupts the course of your contentment,
But plaintive accents of your mournful lovers.

Logistilla's⁷⁵ troops driven from our fields
Still quake with fear, hidden in their far mountains ;
And even Melissa's name, unheard of here
Is only by your aug'ries known to us.

Dirce. Ah ! let us not deceive ourselves, this phantom
Held, this last night, the same discourse with me.

Alcina. Alas ! who then can doubt of our misfortunes ?

Celia. I see a sure and easy remedy ;
A queen appears, whose most auspicious aid
Will guard us from the efforts of Melissa.
The goodness of this queen is highly praised.
'Tis said her heart, whose constancy despised
The insolence of the rebellious waves,⁷⁶
Is ever open to her subjects' vows.

Alcina. 'Tis true, I see her. In this pressing danger
Let us endeavour to engage her succour.
Let's tell her that the public voice proclaims
The charming beauties of her royal soul.
Say that her virtue, higher than her rank,
Adorns the lustre of her noble blood ;
And that our sex's glory she has borne
So far, that times to come will scarce believe it.
That her great heart, fond of the public good,
Gives her a generous contempt of dangers ;
Proof against ought that may befall herself,
She apprehends for nothing but the state.
Say that her benefits profusely poured,
Gain her the love and rev'rence of mankind,

⁷⁵ Logistilla is a good fairy, and the sister of the wicked enchantress Alcina.

⁷⁶ This is an allusion to the troubles of the Fronde during the minority of Louis XIV.

That even the shadow of an ill that threatens her
 Is cause enough to put the world in mourning.
 Say that at the acme of an absolute power,
 Her grandeur without pride or pomp appears ;
 That in most dangerous times her constant prudence
 Has fearless the prerogative supported ;⁷⁷
 And in the happy calm gained by her labours
 Restores it to her son without regret.
 Say, with what great respect, with what complaisance,
 That glorious son rewards her for her cares.
 Let's laud the just laws, and the life-long labours
 Of that same son, the greatest of all monarchs ;
 And how that mother, fortunately fruitful,
 Giving but twice, gave so much to the world.⁷⁸
 In fine, the more to move her to compassion,
 Let's use the eloquence of sighs and tears,
 Then we amidst our greatest pangs may find
 A peaceful refuge at her royal feet.

DIRCE. I know her heart, magnificently generous,
 Does kindly listen to the voice of misery ;
 But yet she ne'er exerted all her power,
 Unless to shield the innocent from wrong ;
 I know she all things can, but dare not think
 She'll stoop so low as to defend our cause.
 She may have been informed of our soft errors,
 And nothing is more clashing with her conduct ;
 Her well-known zeal for piety will render
 Our interests odious to her spotless virtue ;
 And far from growing less at her approach
 My fear redoubling chills my troubled spirits.

ALCINA. Oh ! my own fear's sufficient to afflict me.
 Do not augment my grief, but try to soothe it,
 To furnish my dejected soul, with means
 Of warding off the ills that threaten it.
 Meanwhile let all the palace guards be doubled,
 And if there be no sanctuary for us,
 Let us in our despair our comfort seek,
 Nor yield ourselves at least without resistance.

When they had finished, and Alcina had gone out to double the guards of the palace, a concert of violins was heard, during which the front of the palace opened with wonderful art, and towers rose to view, whilst four giants of great size appeared with four dwarfs, who, by the contrast of their little stature, made that of the giants seem still more excessive. To these giants was committed the guard of the palace, and by them began the first *entrée*.

BALLET OF THE PALACE OF ALCINA.

The first *entrée* was composed of four giants and four dwarfs : the second, of eight Moors, to whom the guard of the interior was entrusted by Alcina, and who carefully visited it, each having two flambeaux.

The third *entrée*. Meanwhile some lover's quarrel prompted six of the knights whom Alcina kept near her to attempt to get out of the palace ; but fortune not seconding the endeavours they made, in their despair they were overcome, after a sharp combat, by as many monsters which attack them.

Fourth *entrée*. Alcina, alarmed by this accident, invokes anew all her spirits, and demands their aid ; two of them present themselves before her, leaping with wonderful force and agility.

⁷⁷ Another allusion to the troubles of the Fronde.

⁷⁸ Louis XIV. had only one brother, the Duke of Orleans.

Fifth *entrée*. Other demons came and seemed to reassure the enchantress that they shall not forget anything that may contribute to her repose.

Sixth and last *entrée*. But hardly had she begun to reassure herself, when she saw the wise Melissa appear under the form of Atlant, near Rogero and some knights of his train. She immediately hastened to hinder her from executing her intention; but she came too late; Melissa had already placed on the finger of that brave knight the famous ring which destroys enchantments. Then thunderclaps, followed by several flashes of lightning, portended the destruction of the palace, which was immediately reduced to ashes by fireworks, which put an end to this adventure, and to the amusements of the Enchanted Island.⁷⁹

It looked as if Heaven, Earth, and Water were all in a flame, and as if the destruction of the splendid palace of Alcina, as well as the liberation of the knights she there kept in prison, could be effected only amidst prodigies and miracles. The height and number of rockets,—those which fell on the shore, and those which came out of the water after having fallen into it,—formed a spectacle so grand and magnificent, that nothing could better terminate the enchantments, than these fireworks; which, ending at last after an extraordinary length and noise, redoubled the loud reports which had begun it.

Then all the court withdrew, and confessed that nothing could be more perfect than these three feasts. It is sufficient acknowledgment of this perfection, to say that, as each of the three days had its partisans, as every one of them had its particular beauties, none could agree which ought to bear away the bell; although they all agreed that they might justly dispute it with all those that ever had been seen till then, and perhaps surpass them.

*The Fourth Day of the Pleasures of the Enchanted Island.*⁸⁰

But although the feasts properly belonging to the pleasures of the Enchanted Island were ended, yet all the diversions of Versailles were not so. The magnificence and gallantry of the King had reserved some for other days, which were no less agreeable.

On Saturday, the 10th, his Majesty had a mind to run at heads,—an exercise of which few people are ignorant, which has come to us from Germany, and is well adapted for shewing a cavalier's skill, as well in managing his horse in times of war, as in rightly using a lance, a dart, and a sword. If there are any who never saw them run at, being not so common as the ring, and brought hither only of late, they may here find a description of it; while those who have had the pleasure of seeing them, may bear with so short a narrative.

The knights enter the lists one after another with lance in hand, and a

⁷⁹ The names of all the dancers are given in the official description; but we have omitted them, as not possessing the smallest interest at the present time. Amongst them appears, however, a certain Molière, who was a professional dancer and singer, and several times displayed his talents before the King. He was in Paris at least ten years before Molière, and has composed a collection of songs, which is printed. For more details about this namesake of our author, see a note by the Bibliophile Jacob in the *Catalogue Soleinne*, Vol. iii., 9282. There had also been another Molière, called François, who died in 1623, and whose novel *Polixène*, published only in 1632, and to be found in the British Museum, caused a certain sensation in those times. See Prefatory Memoir, Vol. I.

⁸⁰ The official account of the feast no longer separates the days; but as nearly all old editions of Molière do so, I have followed them,

dart under the right thigh; and after one of them has run and borne off a head of thick paste-board painted, and like a Turk's, he gives his lance to a page, and, turning the horse partly round, he returns at full gallop to the second head, which is like a Moor's and as black, bears it off with the dart, with which he strikes it as he passes; then taking a javelin a little different in form from a dart, in a third turn he plants it in a buckler, whereon is painted a Medusa's head; and ending his demi-volt, he draws his sword, wherewith, as he gallops past, he bears off a head raised half a foot from the ground; then giving way to another, he who in his running bears off most, gains the prize.

All the courtiers having arranged themselves behind a balustrade of iron gilt, which went quite round the agreeable house of Versailles, and which looks into the trench, where the lists and the barriers were, the King repaired thither, followed by the same knights that ran at the ring. The dukes de Saint-Aignan and de Noailles continued in their former offices, one of marshal of the camp, and the other of judge of the course. Of these, many were run very handsomely and successfully; but the King's skill gained him not only the prize of the ladies' course, but likewise that which was given by the queen. It was a rose of diamonds of great value, which the King won, but freely gave to be run for by the other knights, and for which the marquis de Coaslin contended with the marquis de Soyecourt, and gained.

The Fifth Day of the Pleasures of the Enchanted Island.

On Sunday, at the King's Levee, almost all the conversation turned on the fine running of the preceding day, and occasioned a grand challenge between the duke de Saint-Aignan, who had not yet run, and the marquis de Soyecourt. The running was deferred till the next day, because the marshal duke de Grammont, who bet for the Marquis, was obliged to go to Paris, whence he was not to return till that time.

On that afternoon, the king took all the court to his aviary, which excited great admiration, both by its particular beauties, and by the almost incredible number of birds of all sorts, amongst which were many of great rarity. It would be useless to mention the collation which followed this diversion, since, for eight successive days, every repast might be esteemed one of the greatest feasts that could be made.⁸¹

In the evening, his Majesty caused to be represented, on one of those double theatres of his Salon, which his boundless ingenuity had invented, the very clever comedy of *The Bores*, (see Vol. I., p. 297), written by the sieur de Molière, with *entrées de ballet*.

The Sixth Day of the Pleasures of the Enchanted Island.

The rumour of the challenge which was to be run on Monday the twelfth, caused an infinite number of bets of great value to be laid;

⁸¹ It must not be forgotten that Louis XIV. was an omnivorous eater. As an example of this, I shall give a passage from one of the letters of the *Princesse palatine*, duchess of Orleans: "I have often seen the king eat four plates-full of different soups, a whole pheasant, a partridge, a large plate-full of salad, some mutton roasted, with garlic, two good slices of ham, a plate-full of pastry, and then fruits and sweets." When Louis XIV. was seventy years old (1708), he dieted himself as follows, according to the *Journal de la santé du Roy*: "with some soup, with either some pigeons or a fowl boiled in it, and three roast fowls, of which he ate four wings, the breasts, and one leg." Of course the courtiers tried to imitate him; hence the repeated mention of repasts.

although that of the two knights was but a hundred pistoles. And as the duke, by a happy boldness, gave one head to that dexterous marquis, several betted on the latter, who, coming somewhat late to the King, found a challenge to hasten him. This challenge being only in prose, we have not inserted here.

The duke de Saint-Aignan had likewise shown to some of his friends, as an happy omen of his victory, these three verses :

TO THE LADIES.

If, O ye fair, your sentiments agree
With mine, you shall confess this day, that he
Who conquers Soyecourt conquers ten besides—

still alluding to his name of Guido the savage whom the adventure of the dangerous island made conqueror over ten knights.⁸² As soon as the King had dined, he conducted the queens, the duke and duchess of Orleans, and all the ladies, to a place where a lottery was to be drawn, that nothing might be wanting to the gallantry of these entertainments. The prizes were precious stones, furniture, plate and similar things ; and though chance decided these presents, yet it certainly fell in with his Majesty's desire, when it gave the great prize to the Queen. Every one left that place very well pleased, to go to see the running which was about to begin.

At length Guido and Oliviero appeared in the lists, at five o'clock in the evening, very handsomely dressed and well mounted.

The King and all the court honored them with their presence, and his Majesty himself read the conditions of the running, that there might be no difference between them. The duke de Saint-Aignan was fortunate, for he gained the day.

At night, his Majesty caused to be performed the first three acts of a comedy called *Tartuffe*, which the sieur de Molière had made against the hypocrites. But although the King thought it very diverting, he found so much conformity between those whom a true devotion leads in the way to Heaven, and those whom a vain ostentation of good works does not hinder from committing evil ones, that his extreme delicacy in point of religion could hardly bear that resemblance of vice and virtue which might be mistaken for one another. And although he did not doubt the good intentions of the author, he forbade its being acted in public, and deprived himself of that pleasure, so as not to deceive others, who were less capable of a just discernment.

The Seventh Day of the Pleasures of the Enchanted Island.

On Tuesday the 13th, the King was pleased again to run at heads, as a common sport, wherein he who hit most was to win. His Majesty gained anew the prize of the course of the ladies, the duke de Saint-Aignan that of the sport ; and having had the honour to enter the next time into competition with his Majesty, the incomparable skill of the King gained him that prize also. It was not without unavoidable astonishment, that the King was seen to gain four, whilst running twice to the head. On the same night was played the comedy of *The forced Marriage*, which was likewise the work of the same Molière. The King then took his way

⁸² There is in these lines an allusion to the marquis de Soyecourt's well-known prowess in other fields. See also page 10, note 18.

to Fontainebleau on Wednesday the 14th. All the court was so satisfied with what they had seen, that every one was of opinion that it ought to be put in writing, to give some idea of it to those who did not see such varied and agreeable entertainments, wherein were at once to be admired the project and the success, the liberality with the politeness, the multitude with order, and the satisfaction of all; wherein the indefatigable pains of Monsieur Colbert were employed through all these diversions, notwithstanding his important affairs; wherein the duke de Saint-Aignan acted, as well as invented the designs; wherein the fine verses of the president de Périgny in praise of the queens were so justly conceived, so agreeably turned, and repeated with so much art; wherein those which M. de Benserade made for the knights were generally approved; wherein the great care of M. Bontemps,⁸³ and the application of M. de Launay,⁸⁴ let nothing that was necessary be wanting; wherein every one so advantageously testified his design of pleasing the King, at a time when his Majesty himself thought of nothing but pleasing; and wherein, in a word, all that was seen will for ever continue in the memory of the spectators, even if care had not been taken to preserve in writing the remembrance of all these wonders.

⁸³ Mons. Bontemps was the first *valet de chambre* of the King, and afterwards became governor of the castles of Versailles and Marly. He was the confidant and favourite of Louis XIV., to whom he rendered many secret services. St. Simon praises him in his *Mémoires*.

⁸⁴ M. de Launay was the *intendant des menus plaisirs et affaires de la chambre*.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

PERSONAGES IN THE COMEDY.

IPHITAS, *father to the Princess of Elis.*
 EURYALUS, *Prince of Ithaca.*
 ARISTOMENES, *Prince of Messena.*
 THEOCLES, *Prince of Pylos.*
 ARBATES, *governor to the Prince of Ithaca.*
 LYCAS, *attendant on Iphitas.*
 MORON, *the Princess's fool.*
 THE PRINCESS OF ELIS.⁸⁵
 AGLANTA, *cousin to the Princess.*
 CYNTHIA, *cousin to the Princess.*
 PHILLIS, *attendant on the Princess.*

PERSONAGES IN THE INTERLUDES.

First Interlude.

AURORA.
 LYCISCAS, *a huntsman.*⁸⁶
 THREE HUNTSMEN, *singing.*
 WHIPPERS-IN, *dancing.*

Second Interlude.

MORON.
 HUNTSMEN, *dancing.*

Third Interlude.

PHILLIS.
 MORON.
 A SATYR, *singing.*
 SATYRS, *dancing.*

Fourth Interlude.

PHILLIS.
 TIRCIS, *a singing shepherd.*
 MORON.

Fifth Interlude.

THE PRINCESS.
 PHILLIS.
 CLIMÈNE.

Sixth Interlude.

SHEPHERDS and SHEPHERD-
 ESSES, *singing.*
 SHEPHERDS and SHEPHERD-
 ESSES, *dancing.*

⁸⁵ It has been said in the pamphlet *la Fameuse comédienne* (See Introductory Notice to *The Impromptu of Versailles*, Vol. I.,) that Madame Molière, whilst acting the part of the Princess of Elis, attracted the attention and afterwards responded to the flame, of the Count de Lauzun, and also, perhaps, to those of the Abbé de Richelieu and the Count de Guiche. Several of Molière's biographers have repeated this accusation. M. Bazin, in his *Notes historiques sur la Vie de Molière*, has proved that one of the accused noblemen was at that time in Hungary, and the other in Poland.

⁸⁶ This short part was created by Molière himself. Molière acted also the part of Moron.

THE PRINCESS OF ELIS.

(*LA PRINCESSE D'ÉLIDE.*

FIRST INTERLUDE.

SCENE I.—AURORA.

When Love presents a charming choice
Respond to his flame, oh youthful fair !
Do not affect a pride which no one can subdue,
Though you've been told such pride becomes you well.

When one is of a lovely age
Naught is so handsome as to love.

Breathe freely sighs for him who faithful loves
And challenge those who wish to blame your ways.
A tender heart is lovely ; but a cruel maid
Will never be a title to esteem.

When one is fair and beautiful
Naught is so handsome as to love.

SCENE II.—WHIPPERS-IN *and* MUSICIANS.

Whilst Aurora was singing these verses, four whippers-in were asleep on the grass, one of whom, called Lyciscas, represented by M. de Molière, an excellent actor, who had invented the verses and the whole comedy, was lying between two, whilst the third was at his feet. The other huntsmen were Messrs. Estival, Don, and Blondel, musicians of the king, who had admirable voices, and who awoke, at Aurora's call, and, as soon as she had finished, sang in recitativo.

Hullo! hullo! get up, get up, get up! Everything must be prepared for the hunting match. Hullo! get up; get up quickly.

1 WHIP. Day to the darkest spots imparts its light.

2 WHIP. The air distils its pearls on flowers.

3 WHIP. The nightingales begin their warbling notes, and with their little concerts thrill the air.

ALL THREE. Come, come, get up! quick, get up! (*To Lyciscas asleep*). What is the matter, Lyciscas? What! you are snoring still! you, who promised to outstrip Aurora? Come, get up; get up, quick! Everything must be prepared for the hunting match. Get up quickly, get up! Make haste, get up!

LYCISCAS. (*Waking*). Zounds, you are terrible brawlers! You open your throats early in the morning.

MUSICIANS. Do you not see the light beams everywhere! Come, get up, Lyciscas, get up.

LYC. Oh! let me sleep yet a little while, I entreat you.

MUS. No, no, get up, Lyciscas, get up.

LYC. I only ask about a quarter of an hour.

MUS. Not at all, not at all; get up, quick, get up.

LYC. Alas! I pray you.

MUS. Get up.

LYC. A moment.

MUS. Get up.

LYC. I beseech you.

MUS. Get up.

LYC. Oh!

MUS. Get up.

LYC. I . . .

MUS. Get up.

LYC. I shall have done immediately.

MUS. No, no, get up, Lyciscas, get up. Everything has to be prepared for the hunting match. Quickly, get up; make haste, get up.

LYC. Well, be quiet; I shall rise. You are strange people to torment me thus. You will be the cause of my being unwell all day; for, do you see, sleep is necessary to man, and when one does not sleep one's fill, it happens . . . that . . . one is not . . . (*He falls asleep again.*)

1 MUS. Lyciscas!

2 MUS. Lyciscas!

3 MUS. Lyciscas!

ALL. Lyciscas!

LYC. To the deuce with these brawlers! I wish your throats were stopped with scalding porridge.⁸⁷

ALL. Get up, get up; make haste; get up, quick, get up.

LYC. Oh! how wearisome not to sleep one's fill!

1 MUS. Soho, ho!

2 MUS. Soho, ho!

3 MUS. Soho, ho!

ALL. Soho, ho!

LYC. Ho! ho! ho! ho! Plague take the fellows with their howlings. May the devil take me if I do not give you a good drubbing for this. But what deuced enthusiasm possesses them to come and caterwaul in my ears at this rate?

ALL. Get up!

LYC. Again?

ALL. Get up!

LYC. The devil take you!

ALL. Get up.

LYC. (*Getting up*). What! again! Was there ever such a passion for singing? Zounds! I shall go mad! Since I am disturbed, I will not let the others sleep. I shall torment them as they have done me. Come, soho! gentlemen, get up, get up, quick; you have been sleeping too long. I shall make a devil of a noise everywhere. (*He shouts with all his might*). Get up, get up, get up! Come quick! Soho, ho! get up, get up! Everything must be prepared for the hunt; get up, get up! Lyciscas, get up! Soho! ho! ho! ho!

Lyciscas having at length risen with the greatest difficulty, and having shouted as loud as he could, several horns and hunting-horns are blown, which, together with the violins, begin an entrée-tune, to which six whippers-in dance with great precision and order, whilst winding their horns at certain periods.

⁸⁷ In Sir Walter Scott's *Rob Roy*, chapter xxxii., Bailie Nicol Jarvie says: "And I wish Mr. Jarvie's boots had been fu' o' boiling water when he drew them on for sic a purpose."

ACT I.—ARGUMENT.

This hunt was prepared by the Prince of Elis, who, being of a gallant and magnificent disposition, and desirous that the Princess, his daughter, would think of marriage, to which she was very much averse, had invited to his court the Princes of Ithaca, Messena, and Pylos, thinking that whilst hunting, which she loved much, or during other sports, chariot-races, and the like displays, one of these princes might perhaps please her, and so become her husband.

SCENE I.

Euryalus, Prince of Ithaca, in love with the Princess of Elis; Arbates, his governor, who, indulgent to the prince's passion, praises him in elegant phraseology, instead of blaming him.

EURYALUS, ARBATES.

ARB. This dreamy silence, to which you have accustomed yourself so dolefully, makes you continually seek solitude, those deep sighs which come from your heart, and that gaze so full of languor, certainly say much to one of my age. I believe, my lord, I understand the language; but, for fear of running too great a risk, I dare not be so bold as to explain it without your leave.

EUR. Explain, explain with all freedom, Arbates, these sighs, these looks, and this mournful silence. I give you leave to say that love has subjected me to its laws, and defies me in its turn. I farther admit that you make me ashamed of the weakness of a heart which suffers itself to be overcome.

ARB. What, my lord, shall I blame you for the tender emotions with which I now see you inspired? The sourness of old age cannot embitter me against the gentle transports of an amorous flame. Although my life is near its close, I maintain that love suits well such men as you; that the tribute paid to the charms of a beautiful face is a clear proof of a beautiful mind; and that it is not easy for a young prince to be great and generous without being in love. It is a quality I admire in a monarch. Tenderness of heart is a sure sign that everything may be expected from a prince of your age as soon as we perceive that his soul is capable of love. Yes, that passion, the most beautiful of all others, draws a hundred virtues in its

train. It urges the heart to noble deeds, and all great heroes have felt its ardour. Your infancy, my lord, was spent under my eyes. I have seen realized the expectations formed from your virtues. I observed in you qualities which told of the blood from which you sprung; I discovered in you a fund of wit and brightness; I found you handsome, great, and noble; your courage and your abilities shone forth every day; but I was concerned because I did not perceive any traces of love. Now that the pangs of an incurable wound show that your soul is insensible to its strokes, I triumph, and my heart, full of joy, looks upon you as a finished prince.⁸⁸

EUR. If, for a time, I defied the power of love, alas! my dear Arbates, it takes ample vengeance for it now. If you knew the ills into which my heart is plunged, you yourself would wish that it had never loved. For this is the fate that awaits me; I love—I ardently love the Princess of Elis; you know that that pride which lurks beneath her charming aspect arms her youthful sentiments against love; and that she avoids, during this grand feast, the crowd of lovers who strive to obtain her hand. Alas! how little truth is there in the saying that the being we love charms us at first sight, and that the first glance kindles in us those flames to which Heaven at our birth destined our souls. On my return from Argos, I passed this way, and then saw the Princess. I beheld all the charms with which she is endowed, but looked on them as one would look on a fine statue. Her brilliant youth, which I observed carefully, did not inspire my soul with one secret desire; I quietly returned to the shores of Ithaca, without so much as recalling her to my mind for two years. In the meantime, the rumour spread to my court that she was known to entertain a contempt for love; it was published everywhere that her proud spirit had an unconquerable aversion to marriage, and that, with a bow in her hand, and a quiver on her shoulder, she

⁸⁸ These verses, spoken in a festival given by Louis XIV. to please Mademoiselle de la Vallière, contain a very transparent allusion to the monarch's passion. Of course, many things may be brought forward to excuse Molière; yet, after all, although we admire the dramatist, we have not the same feelings for the courtier.

roamed through the woods like another Diana, loved nothing but hunting, and caused all the young heroes of Greece to sigh in vain. Admire our tempers and fate ! What her presence and beauty failed to do, the fame of her boldness produced in my heart. An unknown transport was born within me, which I could not master. Her disdain so bruited about had a secret charm, which made me carefully call to remembrance all her features. Looking upon her with new eyes, I formed an image of her so noble, so beautiful—picturing to myself so much glory, and such pleasures, if I could but triumph over her coldness, that my heart, dazzled by such a victory, saw its glorious liberty fade away. It in vain resisted such a bait ; the sweetness of it took such complete possession of my senses that, impelled by an invisible power, I sailed at once from Ithaca hither, concealing my ardent passion under the pretence of wishing to be present at these renowned sports, to which the illustrious Iphitas, father of the princess, has invited most of the princes of Greece.

ARB. But of what use, my lord, are the precautions you take ; and why are you so anxious to keep it a secret ? You love this illustrious princess, you say, and come to signalize yourself before her ; yet neither looks, words, nor sighs have informed her of your ardent passion ? I cannot, for my part, understand this policy, which will not allow you to open your heart ; nor do I see what fruit can be expected of a love which avoids all modes of discovering itself.

EUR. And what should I gain, Arbates, by avowing my pangs, but draw down on myself the disdain of her haughty soul, and throw myself into the rank of those submissive princes, whose title of lovers causes her to look on them as enemies ? You see the kings of Messena and Pylos in vain lay their hearts at her feet ; the lofty splendour of their virtues, accompanied by the most assiduous respect, is useless. This repulse of their homage makes me conceal, in sad silence, the warmth of my love. I account myself condemned in seeing her behaviour towards these famous rivals, and read my own sentence in the contempt she shows to them.

ARB. And it is in this contempt and haughty humour

that your love should see its brightest hope, since fortune presents to you a heart to conquer, which is defended only by mere coldness, and does not oppose to your passion the deep-rooted tenderness of some other engagement. A heart already occupied resists powerfully ; but when the soul is free, it is easily overcome, and only a little patience is needed to triumph over all the pride of indifference. Conceal no longer from her the influence which her eyes have upon you ; openly display your passion, and, far from trembling at the example of others, fortify yourself with the hope that you will be successful because they have been repulsed. Perhaps you may possess the secret of touching her obdurate heart, which these princes have not. And if, through her imperious and capricious pride, you should not meet with a more propitious destiny, it is at least a happiness in misfortunes of this kind to see one's rivals rejected with oneself.

EUR. I am glad to find that you approve a declaration of my passion ; by combating my reasons, you delight my soul. I wished to see, by what I said, whether you could approve what I had done. In short, since I must take you into my confidence, there is one who is to explain my silence to the Princess, and perhaps, at the very moment I am talking to you here, the secret of my heart is revealed. This chase, to which she went, you know, this morning early, in order to avoid the crowd of her adorers, is the opportunity which Moron has chosen to declare my passion.

ARB. Moron, my lord ?

EUR. My choice rather astonishes you ; you misjudge him because he is a court fool ; but you must know that he is less of a fool than he wishes to appear, and that, notwithstanding his present employment, he has more sense than those who laugh at him.⁶⁹ The Princess amuses herself with his buffooneries : he has obtained her favour by

⁶⁹ The office of court fool was, at the time Molière wrote, not wholly abolished ; Louis XIV. still kept one, called l'Angeli, who formerly belonged to the Prince de Condé. Very little is known of him, except that he was biting in his remarks, and at last obliged to leave the court. I do not think any court fool was represented on the French stage from the time of *The Princess of Elis* until Victor Hugo's Triboulet in *Le Roi s'amuse*.

a hundred jests, and can thus say, and persuade her to, what others dare not hazard. In short, I think him fit for my purpose; he says he has a great affection for me, and, having been born in my country, will assist my love against all rivals. A little money given him to sustain his zeal . . .

SCENE II.

Moron, represented by M. de Molière, arrives, and, being haunted by the remembrance of a furious wild boar, before which he had taken flight in the chase, asks for assistance. Meeting with Euryalus and Arbates, he places himself between them for greater safety, after having given proofs of his terror and cracked a hundred jokes about his want of courage.

EURYALUS, ARBATES, MORON.

MOR. (*Behind the scenes*). Help, help! save me from this cruel animal.

EUR. I think I hear his voice.

MOR. (*Behind the scenes*). Come to me! for mercy's sake, come to me!

EUR. It is he. Where is he running in such a fright?

MOR. (*Appearing without seeing anyone*). How shall I avoid this frightful boar? Ye gods! preserve me from his horrid tusks, and I promise you, if he does not catch me, four pounds of incense and two of the fattest calves. (*Meeting Euryalus, whom in his fright he takes for the boar from which he is flying*). Oh! I am dead.

EUR. What ails you?

MOR. I took you for the animal, whose throat I beheld ready to swallow me; my lord, I could not recover from my fright.

EUR. What is it?

MOR. Oh! what a strange taste the Princess has; and, in following the chase and her extravagances, what foolishness we must put up with. What pleasure can these hunters find in being exposed to many thousand terrors? Now, if a man hunted only hares, rabbits, or young does, it would be sensible; they are animals of a very gentle nature, and always run away from us. But to go and

attack these unmannerly beasts, who have not the least respect for a human face, and who hunt those who come to hunt them; that is a foolish pastime that I cannot endure.

EUR. Tell us what is the matter.

MOR. (*Turning round*). What a whim of the Princess to take exercise under such difficulties! I could have sworn she would play this trick. As the chariot-race came on to-day, she must needs go hunt to show her open contempt for these sports, and to make it appear . . . But, mum, let me finish my tale, and resume the thread of my discourse. What was I saying.

EUR. You were talking of an exercise under difficulties.

MOR. Ah! yes. Well, then, fainting under this horrible labour (for I was up at break of day fitted out like a famous hunter), I slunk away from them all like a hero, and, finding a good place to take a nap in, I laid me down, and, composing myself, already began to snore comfortably, when suddenly a frightful noise made me open my eyes, and I beheld, coming out from behind an old thicket of the leafy wood, a boar of enormous size for . . .

EUR. What now?

MOR. Nothing. Do not be afraid, but let me get between you, for a reason; I may then be better able to tell you the whole thing. I was saying I beheld the boar, which, being pursued by our people, set up all his bristles with a hideous air; his glaring eyes darted only threats, his mouth with an ugly grin shewed through the foam certain tusks, for those who ventured near him . . . I leave you to imagine it. At this terrible sight, I seized my weapons; but the treacherous brute without the slightest fear rushed straight at me, without my speaking a word to him.

ARB. And you stood your ground?

MOR. I was not such a fool! I threw down my arms and ran like a dozen.

ARB. What! Having weapons, and yet fly from a boar! That was not a valiant action, Moron.

MOR. I confess it was not valiant, but sensible.

ARB. But if one does not immortalize oneself by some exploit . . .

MOR. I am your servant. I had rather people should say, it was here that Moron, by flying without much pressure, saved himself from the fury of a wild boar, than that they should say, here is the famous spot where the brave Moron, with heroic boldness facing the furious rush of a wild boar, lost his life by a wound from his tusk.

EUR. Very good.

MOR. Yes. Without offence to glory, I would rather live two days in the world, than a thousand years in history.

EUR. Your death would indeed grieve your friends; but if your mind has recovered from its fright, may I inquire if the passion which consumes me . . .

MOR. My lord, I will not dissemble with you. I have done nothing yet, not having had the opportunity to speak with the Princess as I desired. The office of court buffoon has its prerogatives, but we must often turn aside from our free attempts. To talk of your flame is a delicate matter; it is a state affair with the Princess. You know in what title she glories, and that her brain is full of a philosophy which wars against marriage, and treats Cupid as a minor god. I must manage the thing skilfully for fear of rousing her tiger humour. One must be careful how to speak to great folks, for they are very ticklish sometimes. Let me manage it by degrees. I am full of zeal for you. I was born your subject. Some other obligations may also contribute to the happiness I design for you. My mother was esteemed handsome in her day, and was not naturally cruel; that generous Prince, your late father, was dangerously gallant, and I have heard that Elpénor, supposed to be my father because he was my mother's husband, related to the shepherds that he was occasionally honoured by a visit from the Prince, and that, during that time, he had the advantage of being bowed to by all the village. That is sufficient! Be that as it may, I intend by my labours . . . But here is the Princess and two of your rivals.

SCENE III.

The Princess of Elis appears afterwards with the Princes

of Messena and Pylos, who show that their characters are very different from that of the Prince of Ithaca, which procured for him, in the heart of the Princess, all the advantages he could desire. This amiable Princess did not show, however, that the merit of this Prince had made any impression on her mind, or that she had so much as observed him. She always professed that, like Diana, she only loved the chase and the forests; and when the Prince of Messena wished to mention the service he had rendered her by rescuing her from a huge boar which had attacked her, she told him that, without diminishing in aught her gratitude, she considered his assistance so much the less considerable, as she, unaided, had killed many as furious, and might perhaps have overcome that one.

THE PRINCESS, AGLANTA, CYNTHIA, ARISTOMENES, THEOCLES, EURYALUS, PHILLIS, ARBATES, MORON.

ARIS. Do you upbraid us, madam, for saving your charms from this peril? For my part, I should have thought that to overcome the boar which was about to attack you so furiously was an adventure (not knowing of the hunt) for which we ought to have thanked our happy fate; but, by your coldness, I see plainly that I ought to be of another opinion, and quarrel with that fatal power of chance which made me take part in an affair that has given you offence.

THEO. For my part, madam, I esteem myself very happy in having performed this action for which my whole heart was anxious, and, notwithstanding your displeasure, cannot consent to blame fortune for such an adventure. I know that, when one is disliked everything one does displeases; but even were your anger greater than it is, it is an extreme pleasure, when one's love is extreme, to be able to rescue from peril the object of one's love.

PRIN. And do you think, my lord, since I must speak, that there would have been anything in this danger to terrify me so greatly? That the bow and arrow, which I love so much, would have been a useless weapon in my hands? And that I, accustomed to traverse our mountains, our plains, our woods, might not dare hope to suf-

fice for my own defence? Surely I have made but little use of my time and the assiduous labours of which I boast, if, in such an emergency, I could not have triumphed over a wretched animal. At least if, in your opinion, my sex in general is unable for such actions, allow me the glory of a higher sphere, and do me the favour, both of you, to believe that, whatever the boar of to-day may have been, I have conquered fiercer ones without your help, my lords.

THEO. But, madam . . .

PRIN. Well, be it so. I see that your desire is to shew me that I owe my life to you; I grant it. Yes, without you I had lost my life. I heartily thank you for your grand assistance, and will go at once to the Prince to inform him of the kindness with which your love has inspired you for me.

SCENE IV.—EURYALUS, ARBATES, MORON.

MOR. Well! was there ever seen such an untamed spirit? The well-timed death of that ugly boar vexes her. Oh! how willingly would I have rewarded anyone who would have rid me of him just now!

ARB. (*To Euryalus*). I see, my lord, her disdain renders you pensive; but it ought not to retard in the least the execution of your plans. Her hour must come, and perhaps it is to you that the honour of conquering her is reserved.

MOR. She must know of your passion before the race, and I . . .

EUR. No, Moron, I do not wish it so any longer. Be careful to say nothing, and leave me to act; I have resolved to take quite a different course. I see plainly she is resolved to despise all who think to gain her heart by deep respect; and the deity who induces me to sigh for her has inspired me with a new way to conquer her. Yes, it is he who has caused this sudden change, and from him I await its happy conclusion.

ARB. May one know, my lord, by what means you hope . . .

EUR. You shall see it. Follow me and keep silence.

SECOND INTERLUDE

ARGUMENT.

The agreeable Moron leaves the Prince to go and talk of his growing passion to the woods and the rocks, uttering everywhere the beautiful name of his shepherdess Phillis; a ridiculous echo answers him whimsically; he takes so great a pleasure in it, that, laughing in a hundred ways, he makes the echo answer as often, without seeming at all tired of it. But a bear interrupts this fine amusement, and surprises him so much by the unexpected sight, that he shows visible signs of terror, which causes him to make before the bear all the bows he can think of to mollify him. At length he is going to run up a tree; but seeing that the bear is also going to climb, he cries out for help so loudly, that eight peasants armed with pointed sticks and spears appear, whilst another bear comes after the first. A battle then begins, which ends with the death of one of the bears, and the flight of the other.

SCENE I.—MORON, *alone*.

Good bye, till I see you again; as for me, I shall stay here, and have a little conversation with these trees and rocks.

Woods, meadows, fountains, flowers, that behold my pale countenance, if you do not know it, I tell you I am in love. Phillis is the charming object who has fixed my heart. I became her lover by seeing her milk a cow; her fingers, quite full of milk, and a thousand times whiter, squeezed the udder in an admirable manner. Ouf! the thought of it will drive me crazy. Ah! Phillis! Phillis! (*echo*, Phillis!) ah! (*echo*, ah!) hem! (*echo*, hem!) ah! (*echo*, ah!) oh! (*echo*, oh!) oh! (*echo*, oh!) This is a funny echo! Hom! (*echo*, hom!) ha! (*echo*, ha!) ha! (*echo*, ha!) hu! (*echo*, hu!) This is a funny echo.

SCENE II.—A BEAR, MORON.

MOR. (*Seeing a bear approaching*). Oh, Master bear, I am your very humble servant. Pray, spare me; I assure you I am not worth eating; I am only skin and bone, and I see certain people yonder who would serve your turn much better. Eh! eh! eh! my lord, gently, if you please. There (*he caresses the bear and trembles with fear*), there, there, there. Ha, my lord, how handsome and well-made your highness is! You look quite stylish, and you have the prettiest shape in the world. Ah! what beautiful bristles! what a beautiful head! what beautiful, sparkling,

and large eyes! Ah! what a pretty little nose! what a pretty little mouth! what darling little teeth! Ah! what a beautiful throat! what beautiful little paws! what well-shaped little nails (*the bear gets on his hind legs*)! Help! help! I am dead! Have mercy! Poor Moron! Oh! good Heavens! Oh! quick, I am lost. (*The huntsmen appear and Moron climbs up a tree*). (*He addresses the huntsmen*). Oh! gentlemen, take pity upon me. (*The huntsmen fight with the bear*). That is right gentlemen, kill that ugly beast for me. Assist them, kind Heaven! All right he runs away; there he stops and falls upon them. That is right, there is one who has given him a thrust in his throat. They all surround him. Courage—stand to it! well done, my friends! That is right! go on! again! Oh! there he is on the ground; it is all over with him; he is dead. Let us come down now and give him a hundred blows. (*Moron comes down the tree*). Your servant, gentlemen, I am much obliged to you for having delivered me from this animal. Now that you have killed him, I am going to finish him, and triumph with you.

These fortunate huntsmen had no sooner gained this victory, than Moron, grown bold by the danger being remote, wishes to go and give a thousand blows to the animal, no longer able to defend himself, and does all that a braggart, not over bold, would have done on such an occasion; the huntsmen, to show their joy, dance a very fine entrée.

ACT II.—ARGUMENT.

The Prince of Ithaca and the Princess had a very gallant conversation about the chariot race which was in preparation. She had ere this told one of the princesses, her relatives, that the insensibility of the Prince of Ithaca disturbed her, and was disagreeable to her: that, although she did not wish to love any one, it was very sad to see that he loved nothing, and that, although she had resolved not to go to see the races, she now would go, in order to endeavour to triumph over the liberty of a man who was so fond of it. It might easily be perceived that the merit of this prince produced its ordinary effect; that his fine qualities had touched her proud heart, and had begun partly to thaw that ice which had resisted until then all the ardour of love. Advised by Moron, whom he had gained over, and who knew well the heart of the Princess, the more the Prince pretended to be

insensible, although he was but too much in love, the more the Princess resolved to win his affections, though she did not intend to return his love. The Princes of Messena and Pylos took their leave of her, to go to prepare for the races, and spoke of the expectation they had of being conquerors, because they desired to please her. The Prince of Ithaca, on the contrary, told her that, having never been in love with any thing, he was going to try to obtain the prize for his own satisfaction. This made the Princess all the more anxious to subdue a heart, already sufficiently subdued, but which knew how to disguise its sentiments in a wonderful manner.

SCENE I.—THE PRINCESS, AGLANTA, CYNTHIA, PHILLIS.

PRIN. Yes, I love to dwell in these peaceful spots. There is nothing here but what enchants the eye; and all the noble architecture of our palaces must yield the palm to these simple beauties formed by nature. These trees, these rocks, these waters, this fresh turf, have charms for me of which I never tire.

AGL. Like you, I love tranquil retreats where one avoids the bustle of the city. Such places are adorned with a thousand charming objects; and what is surprising is that, at the very gates of Elis, those gentle souls who hate a crowd may find so vast and beautiful a solitude. But, to tell you the truth, in these days of rejoicing your retreat here appears somewhat unseasonable, and puts a slight on the magnificent preparations made by each prince for the public entertainment. The grand spectacle of the chariot-race merits the honour of your notice.

PRIN. What right have they to desire my presence, and what do I owe, after all, to their magnificence? They take these pains on purpose to win me, and my heart is the only prize for which they all strive. But with whatever hope they may flatter themselves, I am greatly mistaken if either of them carries it off.

CYN. How long will this heart be provoked at the innocent designs which are formed to touch it; and regard the trouble which people give themselves as so many offences against your person? I know that in pleading the cause of love, I am exposed to your displeasure, but as I have the honour to be related to you, I oppose myself to the harshness which you show; and cannot feed by flattery your resolution of never loving. Is anything more beautiful than the innocent flame which brilliant merit

kindles in the soul? What happiness would there be in life, if love were banished from among mortals? No, no, the delights which it affords are infinite, and to live without loving is, properly speaking, not to live at all.⁹⁰

AGL. For my part, I think that this passion is the most agreeable business of life; that, in order to live happily, it is necessary to love, and that all pleasures are insipid unless mangled with a little love.

PRIN. Can you two, being what you are, talk thus? And ought you not to blush for countenancing a passion which is nothing but error, weakness, and extravagance, and of which all the disorders are so repugnant to the glory of our sex? I intend to maintain its honour until the last moment of my life, and will never trust those men who pretend to be our slaves, only to become in time our tyrants. All these tears, all these sighs, all this homage, all these respects, are but snares laid for our hearts, and which often induce them to act basely. For my part, when I behold certain examples, and the hideous meanesses to which that passion can debase persons who are under its sway, my whole heart is moved; I cannot bear that a soul which possesses ever so little pride should not feel horribly ashamed of such weaknesses.

CYN. Ah, madam, there are certain weaknesses that are not at all shameful, and which it is beautiful to have in the highest degree of glory. I hope that one day you will change your mind; and if Heaven please, we shall shortly see your heart . . .

PRIN. Hold. Do not finish that strange wish. I have too unconquerable a horror of such debasement; if I should ever be capable of sinking so low, I should certainly never forgive myself.

AGL. Take care, madam! Love knows how to revenge himself for the contempt shown him, and perhaps . . .

PRIN. No, no. I defy all his darts; the great power

⁹⁰ As far as this line the play is, in the original, in verse; but in the printed edition, Molière inserted the following notice: "The design of the author was to treat thus the whole comedy. But an order of the King, who hurried on this affair, compelled him to finish the remainder in prose, and to pass lightly over several scenes, which he would have extended if he had had more leisure."

which is attributed to him is nothing but an idle fancy, and an excuse for feeble hearts, who represent him as invincible to justify their weakness.

CYN. But all the world recognizes his power, and you see that the gods themselves are subject to his empire. We are told that Jupiter loved more than once, and that Diana herself, whom you so much affect to imitate, was not ashamed to breathe sighs of love.

PRIN. Public opinions are always mixed with error. The gods are not such as the vulgar make them out to be, and it is a want of respect to attribute to them human frailties.

SCENE II.—THE PRINCESS, AGLANTA, CYNTHIA, PHILLIS, MORON.

AGL. Come hither, Moron; come, help us to defend love against the Princess's opinion.

PRIN. Your side is strengthened by a grand defender truly!

MOR. Upon my word, madam, I believe that after my example there is no more to be said, and that none should doubt any longer the power of love. I for a long time defied his arms, and acted like a rogue, just as any other; but at length my pride was cowed, and you have a traitress (*pointing to Phillis*) who has made me tamer than a lamb. After that, you ought to have no scruples to love; and, since I have submitted to him, others may do the same.

CYN. What! Moron in love?

MOR. Yes, indeed.

CYN. And is he beloved?

MOR. And why not? Am I not well enough made for that? I think this face is passable enough; and as to elegant manners, thank Heaven, we yield to none.

CYN. Without doubt, it would be wrong to . . .

SCENE III.—THE PRINCESS, AGLANTA, CYNTHIA, MORON, PHILLIS, LYCAS.

LYC. Madam, the Prince, your father, is coming hither to seek you; he brings with him the Princes of Pylos, of Ithaca, and of Messena.

PRIN. Heavens! what does he mean by bringing them

to me? Has he resolved on my ruin, and would he force me to choose one of them?

SCENE IV.—IPHITAS, EURYALUS, ARISTOMENES, THEOCLES,
THE PRINCESS, AGLANTA, CYNTHIA, PHILLIS, MORON.

PRIN. (*Iphitas*). My lord, I beg you to give me leave to prevent, by two words, the declaration of the thoughts which you may perhaps foster. There are two truths, my lord, the one as certain as the other, of which I can assure you; the one is, that you have an absolute power over me, and that you can lay no command upon me which I would not blindly obey; the other is, that I look upon marriage as death, and that it is impossible for me to conquer this natural aversion. To give me a husband and to kill me are the same thing; but your will takes precedence, and my obedience is dearer to me than life. After this, my lord, speak; say freely what you desire.

IPH. Daughter, you are wrong to be so alarmed; and I am grieved that you can think me so bad a father as to do violence to your sentiments, and to use tyrannically the power which Heaven has given me over you. I wish, indeed, that your heart were capable of loving some one. All my desires would be satisfied if that were to happen; and I proposed to celebrate the present fêtes and sports only to assemble all the illustrious youth of Greece, that amongst them you might meet one who would please you and determine your choice. I say, I ask of Heaven no other happiness than to see you married. To obtain this favour, I have this morning again offered up sacrifice to Venus; and if I know how to interpret the language of the gods, the goddess promised me a miracle. But, be this as it may, I will act like a father who loves his daughter. If you can find one on whom to fix your inclination, your choice shall be mine, and I shall consider neither interests of state nor advantages of alliance. If your heart remains insensible, I shall not attempt to force it. But at least be polite in answer to the civilities offered to you, and do not oblige me to make excuses for your coldness. Treat these princes with the esteem which you owe them, and receive with gratitude the proofs of their

zeal. Come and see this race in which their skill will appear.

THEO. (*To the Princess*). Every one will do his utmost to gain the prize of this chariot-race. But to tell you the truth, I care little for the victory, since your heart is not to be contended for.

ARIS. For my part, madam, you are the only prize I propose to myself everywhere. It is you whom I imagine to be the reward in these combats of skill; I aspire honourably to gain this race only to obtain a degree of glory which may raise me nearer to your heart.

EUR. As for me, madam, I do not go with any such thought. As I have all my life professed to love nothing, I take pains, but not with the same object as the other princes. I do not pretend to obtain your heart, and the honour of gaining the race is the sole advantage to which I aspire.

SCENE V.—THE PRINCESS, AGLANTA, CYNTHIA, PHILLIS,
MORON.

PRIN. Whence proceeds thus unexpected haughtiness? Princesses, what do you say of this young Prince? . Did you observe what an air he assumed?

AGL. It is true it was somewhat haughty.

MOR. (*Aside*). Oh! what a fine trick he has played her!

PRIN. Do you not think it would be pleasant to humble his pride, and to abase a little that hectoring heart?

CYN. As you are accustomed to receive nothing but homage and adoration from the whole world, such a compliment as his must indeed surprise you.

PRIN. I confess it has caused me some emotion; and I should much like to find a way to chastise this pride. I had no great desire to go to this race, but now I shall go on purpose, and do all I can to inspire him with love.

CYN. Take care, madam, the enterprise is dangerous; and when one tries to inspire love, one runs a risk of receiving it.

PRIN. Oh, pray apprehend nothing. Come, I shall answer for myself.

THIRD INTERLUDE.

SCENE I.—MORON, PHILLIS.

MOR. Phillis, stay here.

PHIL. No, let me follow the rest.

• MOR. Oh! cruel creature! If Tircis had asked you, you would have stayed fast enough.

PHIL. That may be. I own I love much better to be with him than with you, for he amuses me with his voice, and you deafen me with your cackle. When you sing as well as he does, I promise to listen to you.

MOR. Oh, stay a little.

PHIL. I cannot.

MOR. Pray do.

PHIL. No, I tell you.

MOR. (*Holding Phillis*). I will not let you go . . .

PHIL. What a bother!

MOR. I only ask to be one instant with you.

PHIL. Well, I shall stay, provided you promise me one thing.

MOR. What?

PHIL. Not to speak at all.

MOR. Oh, Phillis!

PHIL. If you do, I shall not stay.

MOR. Will you . . .

PHIL. Let me go.

MOR. Well, stay; I shall not say a word.

PHIL. Take care you do not, for at the first word I shall run.

MOR. Be it so (*Making some gestures*). Ha, Phillis! Ha! . . .

SCENE II.—MORON, *alone*.

She runs away, and I cannot overtake her. That is the mischief. If I could but sing, I might do my business better. Most women now-a-days are caught by the ear; that is the reason why every one learns music; no one succeeds with them but with little songs and little verses that are warbled to them. I must learn to sing that I may act like others. Oh! here is the very man.

SCENE III.—A SATYR, MORON.

SAT. (*Sings*). La, la, la.

MOR. Ah, friend Satyr, you know what you promised me, ever so long ago. Pray teach me to sing.

SAT. I will; but first listen to a song I have just made.

MOR. (*Aside and in a whisper*). He is so used to sing that he cannot speak otherwise. (*Aloud*). Come, sing, I am listening to you.

SAT. (*Sings*). I was carrying . . .

MOR. A song, do you say?

SAT. I was . . .

MOR. A song to be sung?

SAT. I was . . .

MOR. A lover's song? Hang it!

SAT. I was carrying in a cage two sparrows I had caught, when young Chloris, in a dark grove, showed to my astonished eyes her blooming and lovely countenance. When I beheld her gaze, so skilled in conquering, I said to the sparrows, Alas! console yourselves, poor little animals, he who caught you is much more caught than you are.

Moron was not satisfied with this song, though he thought it very pretty; he asked for one with more passion in it, and, begging the Satyr to sing him the one he had heard him sing some days before, the Satyr thus continued:

In your songs so sweet, sing to my fair one, oh birds, sing all my mortal pain. But if the cruel maid gets angry when she hears the true story of the pangs I endure for her sake, then, birds, be silent.

This second song having moved Moron very much, he desires the Satyr to teach him to sing it.

MOR. Ah! this is fine; teach it me.

SAT. La, la, la, la.

MOR. La, la, la, la.

SAT. Fa, fa, fa, fa.

MOR. Fa yourself.⁹¹

⁹¹ In the original there is a play on words which cannot be rendered into English. The musical scale consisted formerly of the notes ut, ré, mi, fa, sol, la, si, ut; hence when Moron answers the Satyr *Fat toi-meme*; it may mean "fa yourself," or "dandy yourself."

The Satyr gets angry, and by degrees places himself in an attitude as if he was coming to fisticuffs; the violins begin to play, and several Satyrs dance an agreeable entrée. ⁹²

ACT III.—ARGUMENT.

In the meantime the Princess of Elis was very uneasy; the Prince of Ithaca had gained the prize at the races; afterwards the Princess had sung and danced in an admirable manner; and yet it did not seem that these gifts of nature and art had been even observed by the Prince of Ithaca; she complains of it to the Princess, her relative; she also speaks of it to Moron, who calls that unfeeling Prince a brute. At last, seeing him herself, she cannot refrain from making some serious allusions to it; he candidly answers that he loves nothing except his liberty, and the pleasures of solitude and the chase, in which he delights.

SCENE I.—THE PRINCESS, AGLANTA, CYNTHIA, PHILLIS.

CYN. It is true, madam, that this young prince showed uncommon skill, and that his bearing was surprising. He is the conqueror in this race, but I doubt much if he leaves with the same spirit with which he came; for you aimed such blows at him that it was difficult to defend himself, and, without mentioning anything else, your graceful dancing and the sweetness of your voice had charms to-day to touch the most insensible.

PRIN. There he comes, conversing with Moron. We shall know what he is talking of. Let us not interrupt them, but turn this way, to meet them again by-and-bye.

SCENE II.—EURYALUS, ARBATES, MORON.

EUR. Ah, Moron! I confess I was enchanted; never have so many charms together met my eyes and ears. She is, in truth, adorable at all times; but she was at that moment more so than ever. New charms enhanced her beauty. Never was her face adorned with more lively colours, nor were her eyes armed with swifter or more piercing shafts.

⁹² Shakespeare, in his *Merchant of Venice* (Act v., Scene i.), has also given a kind of musical interlude, in the scene between Lorenzo and Jessica; but in it the sparkling poetry sometimes soars to the highest realms of lyric enthusiasm; Molière wished only to give a comic scene, interspersed with some songs.

The sweetness of her voice showed itself in the perfectly charming air which she deigned to sing; and the marvellous tones she uttered went to the very depth of my soul, and held all my senses so enraptured that they could not recover. She then showed an agility altogether divine; her lovely feet upon the enamel of the soft turf traced such delightful steps as put me quite beside myself, and bound me by irresistible bonds to the easy and accurate motion with which her whole body followed those harmonious strains. In short, never did soul feel stronger emotions than mine. More than twenty times have I thought to give up my resolution, cast myself at her feet, and declare to her frankly the ardour which I felt for her.

MOR. Take my advice, my lord, and be careful how you do that.—You have discovered the best method in the world, and I am greatly deceived if it does not succeed. Women are animals of a whimsical nature; we spoil them by our tenderness; and I verily believe we should see them run after us, were it not for the respect and submission whereby men allure them.

ARB. My lord, here comes the princess, a little in advance of her retinue.

MOR. At least continue as you have begun. I shall go and see what she will say to me. In the meantime, walk you in these alleys without showing any desire to join her, and if you do accost her, stay as little with her as you can.

SCENE III.—THE PRINCESS, MORON.

PRIN. You are intimate, Moron, with the Prince of Ithaca?

MOR. Ah, madam! we have known one another a long time.

PRIN. What is the reason that he did not walk so far as this, but turned the other way when he saw me?

MOR. He is a whimsical fellow, and only loves to converse with his own thoughts.

PRIN. Were you present just now when he paid me that compliment?

MOR. Yes, madam, I was, and thought it rather impertinent, under favour of his princeliness.

PRIN. For my part, I confess, Moron, this avoidance of

me offends me. I have a great desire to make him fall in love with me, that I may bring down his pride a little.

MOR. Upon my word, madam, you would not do ill; he deserves it: but, to tell you the truth, I have great doubts of your success.

PRIN. How so?

MOR. How? Why, he is the proudest little rogue you ever saw. He thinks no one in the world is like him, and that the earth is not worthy to bear him.

PRIN. But has he not yet spoken of me?

MOR. He? No.

PRIN. Did he say nothing to you of my singing and dancing?

MOR. Not the least word.

PRIN. This contempt is shocking. I cannot bear this strange haughtiness, which esteems nothing.

MOR. He neither esteems nor loves any one but himself.

PRIN. There is nothing I would not do to humble him as he deserves.

MOR. We have no marble in our mountains harder or more insensible than he.

PRIN. There he comes.

MOR. Do you see how he passes without noticing you?

PRIN. Pray, Moron, go and tell him I am here, and oblige him to come and speak to me.

SCENE IV.—THE PRINCESS, EURVALUS, ARBATES, MORON.

MOR. (*Going up to Euryalus and whispering to him*). My lord, I tell you everything is going on well. The Princess wishes you to come and speak to her; but take care to continue to play your part. For fear of forgetting it, do not stay long with her.

PRIN. You are very solitary, my lord; and it is an extraordinary disposition of yours to renounce our sex in this manner, and to avoid at your age that gallantry upon which your equals pride themselves.

EUR. This disposition, madam, is not so extraordinary but that we may find examples of it at no great distance; you cannot condemn the resolution I have taken of never loving anything, without also condemning your own sentiments.

PRIN. There is a great difference. That which becomes well our sex does not well become yours. It is noble for a woman to be insensible, and to keep her heart free from the flames of love : but what is a virtue in her is a crime in a man ; and as beauty is the portion of our sex, you cannot refrain from loving us without depriving us of the homage which is our due, and committing an offence which we ought all to resent.

EUR. I do not see, madam, that those who will not love should take any interest in offences of this kind.

PRIN. That is no reason, my lord ; for although we will not love, yet we are always glad to be loved.

EUR. For my part, I am not of that mood ; and as I design to love none I should be sorry to be beloved.

PRIN. Why so ?

EUR. Because we are under an obligation to those who love us, and I should be sorry to be ungrateful.

PRIN. So that, to avoid ingratitude, you would love the one who loved you ?

EUR. I, madam ? Not at all. I say I should be sorry to be ungrateful ; but I would sooner be so than be amorous.

PRIN. Perhaps such a person might love you that your heart . . .

EUR. No, madam ; nothing is capable of touching my heart. Liberty is the sole mistress whom I adore ; and though Heaven should employ its utmost care to form a perfect beauty, in whom should be combined the most marvellous gifts both of body and mind ; in short, though it should expose to my view a miracle of wit, cleverness, and beauty, and that person should love me with all the tenderness imaginable, I confess frankly to you I should not love her.

PRIN. (*Aside*). Was ever anything seen like this ?

MOR. (*To the Princess*). Plague take the little brute ! I have a great mind to give him a slap in the face.

PRIN. (*Aside*). This pride confounds me ! I am so vexed that I am beside myself !

MOR. (*In a whisper to the Prince*). Courage, my lord ; everything goes as well as can be.

EUR. (*To Moron*). Ah, Moron, I am exhausted ! I have made strange efforts.

PRIN. (*To Euryalus*). You must be very unfeeling, indeed, to talk as you do.

EUR. Heaven has not made me of another disposition. But, madam, I interrupt your walk, and my respect ought to inform me that you love solitude.

SCENE V.—THE PRINCESS, MORON.

MOR. He is not inferior to you, madam, in hardness of heart.

PRIN. I would willingly give all I possess in the world to triumph over him.

MOR. I believe you.

PRIN. Could not you serve me, Moron, in such a design?

MOR. You know well, madam, that I am wholly at your service.

PRIN. Speak of me to him in your conversation. Cunningly praise my charms and my lofty birth; try to shake his resolution by encouraging him to hope; I give you leave to say all you think fit, to try to make him in love with me.

MOR. Leave it to me.

PRIN. It is a thing I have set my heart on. I ardently wish he may love me.

MOR. It is true, the little rascal is well made; he has a good appearance, a good countenance, and I believe would suit very well a certain young Princess.

PRIN. You may expect anything from me, if you can but find means to inflame his heart for me.

MOR. Nothing is impossible; but, madam, if he should come to love you, pray what would you do?

PRIN. Oh, then I would take delight in fully triumphing over his vanity; I would punish his disdain by my coldness, and practise on him all the cruelties I could imagine.

MOR. He will never yield.

PRIN. Ah! Moron, we must make him yield.

MOR. No, he will not; I know him; my labour will be in vain.

PRIN. We must, however, try everything, and prove if

his soul be entirely insensible. Come, I will speak to him, and follow an idea which has just come into my head.

FOURTH INTERLUDE.

SCENE I.—PHILLIS, TIRCIS.

PHIL. Come, Tircis, let them go, and depict to me your sufferings, in the manner you know. Your eyes have spoken to me for a long time, but I should be more glad to hear your voice.

TIR. (*Sings*). Alas! you listen to my sad complaints; but, O matchless fair one, I am not the better for it; I make an impression on your ears, but not on your heart.

PHIL. Well, well, it is something to touch the ear; time will produce the rest. Meanwhile, sing me some little ditty that you have made for me.

SCENE II.—MORON, PHILLIS, TIRCIS.

MOR. Oh! have I caught you, cruel one? You slink away from the company to listen to my rival?

PHIL. Yes, I slink away for that reason. I repeat it to you, I find a pleasure in his company; we hearken willingly to lovers when they complain so agreeably as he does. Why do you not sing like him? I should then take a delight in listening to you.

MOR. If I cannot sing, I can do other things; and when . . .

PHIL. Be silent, I wish to hear him. Tircis, say what you like.

MOR. Ah! cruel one . . .

PHIL. Silence, I say, or I shall get angry.

TIR. (*Sings*). Ye tufted trees; and ye enamelled meads; that beauty winter stript you of is restored to you by spring. You resume all your charms; but, alas! my soul cannot resume the joy it has lost!

MOR. Zounds! why cannot I sing? Oh! stepmotherly nature, why did you not give me the means of singing like any other?

PHIL. Really, Tircis, nothing can be more agreeable, and you bear away the bell from all your rivals.

MOR. But why can I not sing ? Have I not a stomach, a throat, and a tongue, as well as any other man ? Yes, yes, come on then. I too will sing, and show you that love enables one to do all things. Here is a song I made for you.

PHIL. Come, sing it then ; I shall listen to you for the novelty of the thing.

MOR. Pluck up your courage, Moron, there is nothing like boldness. (*He sings*). Your extreme severity cruelly wounds my heart. Ah ! Phillis, I am dying ; deign to lend me some assistance. Will you be the stouter for it, because you have allowed me to die ? . . . Well said, Moron.

PAIL. That is very well. But, Moron, I should like very much the glory of having some lover die for me ! It is an advantage I have not yet enjoyed ; I find I should love with all my heart a person who would love me sufficiently to kill himself.

MOR. You would love the person that would kill himself for you ?

PHIL. Yes.

MOR. That is the only thing to please you ?

PHIL. Ay.

MOR. It is done then. I will show you that I can kill myself when I have a mind to it.

TIR. (*Sings*). Ah ! how pleasant it is to die for the object one loves.

MOR. (*To Tircis*). It is a pleasure you may have when you like.

TIR. (*Sings*). Take courage, Moron, quickly die, like a generous lover.

MOR. (*To Tircis*). Pray, mind your own business, and let me kill myself as I like. Come, I will shame all lovers. (*To Phillis*). Behold, I am not a man who makes many compliments. Do you see this dagger ? Pray, observe how I shall pierce my heart. (*Laughing at Tircis*). I am your servant ; I am not such a fool as I look.

PHIL. Come, Tircis, repeat to me, in an echo, what you have sung.

ACT IV.—ARGUMENT.

The Princess of Elis, hoping by a stratagem to discover the sentiments of the Prince of Ithaca, confides to him that she loves the Prince of Messena. Instead of seeming concerned at it, he gives her tit-for-tat, and tells her that he is enamoured of the Princess, her relative, and that he will demand her in marriage of the King, her father. At this unexpected news, the Princess of Elis loses all firmness, and although she tries to restrain herself before him, yet, as soon as he is gone, she so earnestly entreats her cousin not to listen favourably to this Prince, and never to marry him, that she cannot refuse. The Princess complains even to Moron, who, having freely told her that it was a sign she loved the Prince of Ithaca, is driven from her presence an account of his remark.

SCENE I.—THE PRINCESS, EURYALUS, MORON.

PRIN. Prince, as hitherto we have shown a conformity of sentiment, and Heaven seems to have imbued us both with the same affection for liberty and the same aversion to love, I am glad to open my heart to you, and to entrust you with the secret of a change which will surprise you. I have always looked upon marriage as a frightful thing, and have vowed rather to abandon life than to resolve ever to lose that liberty of which I was so fond; but now, one moment has dispersed all these resolutions. The merit of a certain prince has to-day become obvious to me; my soul suddenly, as it were by a miracle, has become sensible to that passion which I have always despised. I presently found reasons to authorize this change; I may attribute it to my willingness to satisfy the eager solicitations of a father, and the wishes of a whole kingdom; but, to tell you the truth, I dread the judgment you may pass upon me, and would fain know whether or not you will condemn my design of taking a husband.

EUR. You may make such a choice, madam, that I should certainly approve of it.

PRIN. Whom do you think, in your opinion, I intend to choose?

EUR. If I were in your heart I could tell you; but as I am not, I do not care to answer you.

PRIN. Guess, name some one.

EUR. I am too much afraid of making a mistake.

PRIN. But for whom would you wish that I should declare myself?

EUR. I know well, to tell you the truth, for whom I could wish it; but, before I explain myself, I must know your thoughts.

PRIN. Well, Prince, I will disclose it to you. I am sure you will approve of my choice; and, to hold you no longer in suspense, the Prince of Messena is he whose merit has made me love him.

EUR. (*Aside*). Oh, Heavens!

PRIN. (*Aside to Moron*). My invention has succeeded, Moron. He is disturbed.

MOR. (*To the Princess*). Good, madam. (*To the Prince*). Take courage, my lord. (*To the Princess*). He is hit hard. (*To the Prince*). Do not be disheartened.

PRIN. (*To Euryalus*). Do you not think that I am in the right, and that the Prince possesses very great merit?

MOR. (*Aside to the Prince*). Recover yourself and answer.

PRIN. How comes it, Prince, that you do not say a word, and seem thunderstruck?

EUR. I am so, indeed, and I wonder, madam, that Heaven could form two souls so alike in everything as ours; two souls in which are seen the greatest conformity of sentiment, which have shown, at the same time, a resolution to brave the power of love, and which, in the same instant, have shown an equal facility in losing the character of insensibility. For, in short, madam, since your example authorizes me, I shall not scruple to tell you that love, this very day, has mastered my heart, and that one of the princesses, your cousins, the amiable and beautiful Aglanta, has overthrown with a glance all my proud projects. I am overjoyed, madam, that we cannot reproach each other, as we are equally defeated. I do not doubt that, as I praise your choice greatly, you shall also approve mine. This miracle must become apparent to all the world, and we ought not to delay making ourselves both happy. For my part, madam, I solicit your influence, so that I may obtain her I desire; you will not object that I go immediately to ask her hand of the Prince, your father.

MOR. (*Aside to Euryalus*). Ah, worthy heart! ah, brave spirit!

SCENE II.—THE PRINCESS, MORON.

PRIN. Ah, Moron! I am undone. This unexpected blow absolutely triumphs over all my firmness.

MOR. It is a surprising blow, it is true; I thought at first that your stratagem had taken effect.

PRIN. Ah! this vexation is enough to drive me mad! Another has the advantage of subduing a heart which I wished to conquer.

SCENE III.—THE PRINCESS, AGLANTA, MORON.

PRIN. Princess, I have one thing to beg of you, which you absolutely must grant me. The Prince of Ithaca loves you, and designs to ask your hand of the Prince, my father.

AGL. The Prince of Ithaca, madam!

PRIN. Yes; he has just now told me so himself, and asked my consent to obtain your hand; but I conjure you to reject this proposal, and not lend an ear to what he may say.

AGL. But, madam, if it be true that this prince really loves me, and as you have yourself no design to gain his affections, why will you not suffer . . .

PRIN. No, Aglanta, I desire it of you. I beg you to gratify me so far; and, as I have not the advantage of subduing his heart, let me have the pleasure of depriving him of the joy of obtaining yours.

AGL. Madam, I must obey you; but I should think the conquest of such a heart no contemptible victory.

PRIN. No, no, he shall not have the pleasure of braving me entirely.

SCENE IV.—THE PRINCESS, ARISTOMENES, AGLANTA, MORON.

ARIS. Madam, at your feet I come to thank love for my happy fate, and to testify to you, by my transports, how grateful I am for the surprising goodness with which you deign to favour the most humble of your captives.

PRIN. How?

ARIS. The Prince of Ithaca, madam, just now assured me that, with regard to that celebrated choice which all Greece awaits, your heart had been kind enough to declare itself in my favour.

PRIN. He told you that he had it from my mouth?

ARIS. Yes, madam.

PRIN. He is thoughtless, and you are a little too credulous, prince, to believe so hastily what he told you; such news, in my opinion, should have been doubted for some time; and you could have done no more than believe it, if I myself had told it you.

ARIS. Madam, if I have been too ready in persuading myself . . .

PRIN. Pray, my lord, let us break off this conversation; and, if you will oblige me, let me enjoy a moment's solitude.

SCENE V.—THE PRINCESS, AGLANTA, MORON.

PRIN. With what strange severity Heaven uses me in this adventure! At least, Princess, remember the request I have made to you.

AGL. I have already told you, madam, that you shall be obeyed.

SCENE VI.—THE PRINCESS, MORON.

MOR. But, madam, if he loved you, you would not have him, and yet you will not let him be another's. It is just like the dog in a manger.⁹³

PRIN. No, I cannot bear that he should be happy with another. If such a thing is to be, I believe I shall die with vexation.

MOR. Come, madam, confess all. You would fain have him for yourself; and in all your actions it is easily seen that you rather love this young prince

PRIN. I, I love him? Oh, Heavens! I love him? Have you the insolence to pronounce those words? Out of my sight, impudent man, and never let me see you again.

⁹³ A dog in a manger cannot himself eat the corn and straw that are there, but barks if any other animal approaches, and will not allow it to eat in peace; this is called in French *faire comme le chien du jardinier*—because a dog cannot eat cabbage, and does not permit others to eat it.

MOR. Madam . . .

PRIN. Begone, I say, or I shall make you leave in another manner

MOR. (*Aside*). Upon my word, her heart is no longer free, and . . . (*The Princess casts a look upon him which sends him away*).

SCENE VII.—THE PRINCESS, *alone*.

What unknown emotion do I feel in my heart! What secret uneasiness suddenly disturbs the tranquillity of my soul! Is it not what I have just been told, and do I love this young prince without knowing it! Ah! if it were so, I should be in despair. But it is impossible it should be so, and I plainly perceive that I can never love him. What! I be capable of that baseness! I have seen the whole world at my feet with the utmost insensibility. Respect, homage, submission, could never touch my soul; and shall haughtiness and disdain triumph over it? I have despised all those who have loved me, and shall I love the only one who despises me! No, no, I know well I do not love him; there is no reason for it. But if this is not love which I now feel, what can it be? And whence comes this poison which runs through all my veins, and will not let me rest? Out of my heart, whatever you may be, you enemy who lurk there! Attack me openly, and appear before me as the most frightful monster of all our forests, so that with my darts and javelins I may rid myself of you.

FIFTH INTERLUDE.

SCENE I.—THE PRINCESS, *alone*.

O, you admirable ones, who by your sweet songs can calm the greatest uneasiness, draw near, I pray you, and try to soothe, with your music, the sorrow which I feel.

SCENE II.—THE PRINCESS, CLIMÈNE, PHILLIS.

(*Climène and Phillis sing this duet*).

CLIM. Tell me, dear Phillis, what think you of love?

PHIL. Tell me, what think you, my dear trusty friend?

CLIM. They say its flame is worse than vulture's gnawing,
And that great pangs are suffered when one loves.

PHIL. They say no fairer passion e'er existed,
And that we live not, if we do not love.

CLIM. Which of us two shall be victorious here?

PHIL. Must we believe love to be good or ill?

BOTH. Let's love, and then we'll know
What we ought to believe.

PHIL. Chloris praises love and its flames everywhere.

CLIM. For its sake, Amarant sheds always tears.

PHIL. If it fills every heart with so much pain
Whence comes it that we like to yield to it?

CLIM. If, Phillis, its flame is so full of charms
Why forbid us its pleasures to enjoy?

PHIL. Which of us two shall be victorious here?

CLIM. Must we believe love to be good or ill?

BOTH. Let's love, and then we'll know
What we ought to believe.

PRIN. (*Interrupting them here, says*). Finish alone, if
you like. I cannot remain at rest; and however agreeable
your songs are, they do but redouble my uneasiness.

ACT V.—ARGUMENT.

The heart of the Prince of Messena was agitated by various feelings; the joy which the Prince of Ithaca had caused by maliciously informing him that he was beloved by the Princess, had compelled him to go to her, with a want of consideration which nothing but extreme love could excuse; but he was received in a manner very different from what he hoped for. She asked him who had told him that news; and when she knew that it was the Prince of Ithaca, that knowledge cruelly increased her disease, and made her nearly beside herself. She replied, "He is thoughtless." This so confounded the Prince of Messena that he departed without being able to answer. On the other hand, the Princess went to the King, her father, who came with the Prince of Ithaca, and told the latter not only how delighted he should be to see him allied to him, but even the opinion he entertained that his daughter did not hate him. No sooner was the Princess in her father's presence than, casting herself at his feet, she asked him, as the greatest favour she could ever receive, that the Prince of Ithaca might not marry the Princess Aglanta. This he solemnly promised her; but he told her that if she did not wish him to belong to another, she should take him herself. She answered "that the Prince did not desire it," but in such a passionate manner that it was easy to see the sentiments of her heart. Then the Prince, abandoning all disguise, avowed his love for her, and the stratagem which, knowing her disposition, he had

made use of, in order to attain the object he had now reached. The Princess giving him her hand, the King turned towards the two Princes of Messena and Pylos, and asked them if his two relatives, whose merit was equal to their rank, were incapable of consoling them in their disgrace. They answered that, the honour of his alliance being all they wished for, they could not expect a happier lot. This occasioned so great a joy in the Court, that it spread over the whole neighbourhood.

SCENE I.—IPHITAS, EURYALUS, AGLANTA, CYNTHIA,
MORON.

MOR. (*To Iphitas*). Yes, my lord, it is no jest ; I am what they call in disgrace. I was forced to pack up my traps as quickly as I could ; you never saw any one more suddenly in a passion than she was.

IPH. (*To Euryalus*). Ah, Prince ! how grateful I ought to be for your amorous stratagem, if it has found the secret of touching her heart !

EUR. Whatever, my lord, you may have been told, I dare not, for my part, yet flatter myself with that sweet hope ; but if it is not too presumptuous in me to aspire to the honour of your alliance, if my person and dominions . . .

IPH. Prince, let us not enter upon these compliments. I find in you all that a father could desire ; and if you have gained the heart of my daughter, you want nothing more.

SCENE II.—THE PRINCESS, IPHITAS, EURYALUS, AGLANTA,
CYNTHIA, MORON.

PRIN. Oh, Heaven ! what do I see here !

IPH. (*To Euryalus*). Yes, the honour of your alliance is of the highest value to me ; and without any farther difficulty I consent to your request.

PRIN. (*To Iphitas*). My lord, I throw myself at your feet to beg a favour of you. You have always shewn great tenderness to me ; I owe you much more for your kindness than for my birth. But if ever you had any affection for me, I now ask the greatest proof of it which you can show. My lord, do not listen to that prince's request and do not permit the princess Aglanta to marry him.

IPH. And why, daughter, would you oppose that union ?

PRIN. Because I hate the Prince, and will, if I can, cross his designs.

IPH. You hate him, daughter?

PRIN. Yes, from my heart I confess it.

IPH. And what has he done to you?

PRIN. He has despised me.

IPH. And how?

PRIN. He did not consider me handsome enough to pay his addresses to me.

IPH. What offence does that give you? You will accept no one's hand.

PRIN. No matter. He ought to have loved me like the rest, and at least have left me the glory of refusing him. His love for Aglanta is an insult to me; he disgraces me when, in my presence and in the midst of your court, he has sought the hand of any other but me.

IPH. But what interest can you have in him?

PRIN. My lord, I wish to revenge myself for his disdain; and as I know he is very much in love with Aglanta, with your permission I shall prevent him from being happy with her.

IPH. Then you take this to heart?

PRIN. Without doubt, my lord; and if he obtains his desires, I shall die before your eyes.

IPH. Come, come, daughter, make a frank confession. This Prince's merit has made you open your eyes; and in short, you love him, say what you will.

PRIN. I, my lord?

IPH. Yes, you love him.

PRIN. I love him, say you? Do you impute such baseness to me? Oh, Heavens! how great is my misfortune! Can I hear these words and live? And must I be so unhappy as to be suspected of loving him? Oh! if it were anyone but you, my lord, who spoke thus to me, I know not what I should do.

IPH. Well, well, you do not love him. You hate him, I grant; and I am resolved to content you, so that he shall not wed the Princess Aglanta.

PRIN. Oh! my lord, you give me life.

IPH. But to prevent his ever being hers, you must take him for yourself.

PRIN. You are joking, my lord, and that is not what he desires.

EUR. Pardon me, madam, I am rash enough to aspire so high, and I take to witness the prince, your father, if it was not your hand I asked of him. I have deceived you too long; I must throw off the mask, and, though you use it against me, discover to your eyes the real sentiments of my heart. I have never loved anyone but you, and never shall I love any other. It is you, madam, who took from me that want of feeling which I always affected; all I said to you was only a feint which I adopted, inspired by some secret motive which I did not follow up without doing the greatest violence to my feelings. It must soon have ceased, no doubt, and I am only astonished that it lasted for half a-day; for I was dying, my soul was burning within me, when I disguised my sentiments to you; never did a heart suffer a constraint equal to mine. If this feint, madam, has given you offence, I am ready to die to avenge you; you have only to speak, and my hand will immediately glory in executing the decree you pronounce.

PRIN. No, no, Prince, I do not take it ill that you have deceived me; and would rather that all you have said to me were a feint than not the truth.

IPH. So that you accept the Prince for a husband, my daughter?

PRIN. My lord, I do not yet know what I shall do. Pray give me time to think of it, and spare a little the confusion I am in.

IPH. Prince, you may guess the meaning of this; and you can now see what you may expect.

EUR. I shall wait as long as you please, madam, for this decree of my destiny; and, if it condemns me to death, I shall obey without murmuring.

IPH. Come, Moron, this is a day of peace, and I restore you to favor with the Princess.

MOR. My lord, I shall be a better courtier for the future, and shall take very good care not to say what I think.

SCENE III.—ARISTOMENES, THEOCLES, IPHITAS, the PRINCESS, AGLANTA, CYNTHIA, MORON.

IPH. (*To the Princes of Messina and Pylos*). I am

afraid, princes, that my daughter's choice is not in your favour ; but there are two princesses who may console you for this trifling misfortune.⁹⁴

ARIS. My lord, we have made up our minds ; and, if these amiable Princesses have not too great contempt for hearts which have been repulsed, we may, through them, attain to the honour of your alliance.

SCENE THE LAST.—IPHITAS, the PRINCESS, AGLANTA, CYNTHIA, PHILLIS, EURYALUS, ARISTOMENES, THEOCLES, MORON.

PHIL. (*To Iphitas*). My lord, the goddess Venus has proclaimed everywhere the change in the Princess's heart. All the shepherds and two shepherdesses testify their joy for it by dances and songs ; and, if it is not a spectacle which you despise, you may see the public rejoicings extend as far as this.

⁹⁴ The hands of the two princesses, Aglanta and Cynthia, seem to be right royally disposed of: they have not even been courted, but the answers of the two princes denote also royal causes for alliance.

SIXTH INTERLUDE.

A chorus of SHEPHERDS and SHEPHERDESSES, who dance.

Four Shepherds and two Shepherdesses, dressed in heroic style, and holding each other's hands, sing this song, to which the rest answer.

Proud fair, employ in better way
The power of charming all:
Love, darling rustic maidens:
Our hearts are made to love.
However much we e'er may try
One day comes when we love.
Naught does exist but yet it yields
To the sweet charms of love.
In pristine youth, oh follow
The ardent love's delight.
A heart only begins to live
The day it knows to love.
However much, etc., etc.

*The rest of the Interlude will be found in the Introductory
Notice to this comedy, page 22.*

DON JUAN, OU LE FESTIN DE PIERRE.

COMÉDIE.

DON JUAN; OR, THE FEAST WITH THE STATUE.

A COMEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

(THE ORIGINAL IN PROSE.)

FEBRUARY 15TH, 1665.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

AFTER Molière had written *Tartuffe*, he found it impossible to get permission to play it; all his attempts were in vain; the clerical party was too strong for him; he therefore resolved to write a counterpart to it, in *Don Juan, or the Feast with the Statue*. This play was acted for the first time on the 15th of February, 1665. It contains, perhaps, more severe attacks upon hypocrisy than does even *Tartuffe*. It depicts the hero as a man who, rich, noble, powerful, and bold, respects neither heaven nor earth, and knows no bounds to the gratification of his desires or his passions. He has excellent manners, but abominable principles; he is "a whited sepulchre," and abuses the privileges of nobility without acknowledging its obligations or its duties. Molière sketches no longer the nobleman as ridiculous, but makes him terrible, and shows that his exaggerated hatred of cant leads to the commission of the greatest immoralities, and to Atheism. After having seduced and abandoned many fair maids; after having insulted his father, and openly flaunted the most sceptical doctrines, Don Juan turns hypocrite; for hypocrisy is the climax of all vices. But although the hero of the play is young, elegant, and profligate, Molière makes us feel all the while that, underneath that charming exterior lurks something venomous. No doubt he is witty, but too sarcastic to be pleasant. He is sensual, but less than is generally thought. He is not so much a libertine, as a man who loves to set all rules of decency, order, and morality at defiance. What attracts him is something eccentric, violent, and scandalous. He likes to seduce a nun, or an innocent country girl, who is already engaged; and this not through mere lust, but in order to prove that he can trample upon all human laws; just as he invites to supper the statue of a man whom he has killed, and plays the hypocrite in order to show his scorn for all divine laws. He is not a follower of the modern romantic school, always in pursuit of an eternal idea of beauty, and fluttering from flower to flower; he has arrived at that stage of satiety that only the pangs of his victims can produce any emotion in him. This is proved by the remark he makes to Sganarelle on beholding Donna Elvira (Act i., Scene 2, page 86). He has something of the cruelty of Lovelace in Richardson's *Clarissa Harlowe*, and like him, is faithful to his friends, generous to his enemies, but at the same time cowardly enough to sacrifice any woman to his caprices.

But Molière has not made the hero coarse or ribald; his language is always well chosen; and although his morality may be offensive, his manners are never so. The style of his speech is generally masterly, often

eloquent, and not seldom characteristic of his sneering, insolent, cruel, hypocritical feelings. The author sometimes borders upon almost forbidden ground, as, for example, when Don Juan, after having witnessed the "surprising miracle of a moving and speaking statue," says—"There is really something in that which I do not understand; but, whatever it may be, it is not capable either of convincing my judgment, or of shaking my nerves."

And yet this play made far less sensation than *Tartuffe*, and its representations were never forbidden. The reason of this is simple; *Don Juan*, attacked an abstract idea, but *Tartuffe* satirized a particular class, "the unco guid."

This drama came originally from Spain. A very old legend relates how one of the twenty-four governors of Sevilla, Don Juan de Tenorio, ran away with the daughter of the venerable Commander Gonzalo de Ulloa, whom he killed in a duel, and who was buried in the church of the Franciscans, where a splendid tomb and statue were erected to him. For some time, the murderer, thanks to the privileges of his rank and the influence of his family, set at nought human justice, when a rumour was circulated that, Don Juan having dared to insult the statue of his victim, the latter had come down from his marble tomb, had seized the impious wretch, and had precipitated him to the uttermost depths of the infernal regions. Those who said that he had been allured into the church, under some pretext or other, and slain there, were declared unbelievers and sceptics.

One of the Spanish dramatists, friar Gabriel Tellez, who lived at the beginning of the sixteenth century, wrote, under the name of Tirso de Molina, a comedy on this legend, which he divided into three *jornadas* or days, and which he called *The Seducer of Sevilla and the Stone Guest*.

The action opens at Naples, where a certain Duchess Isabella, of whom Don Juan, under the feigned name of Duke Ottavio, has taken advantage complains loudly to the king, who orders the guilty one to be seized. The seducer escapes, and is shipwrecked on the coast of Tarragona, in Spain, where he meets a young fisherman's daughter, Tisbea, whom he seduces under promise of marriage, and who, when undeceived, throws herself into the sea. We next meet him at Sevilla, where, under the name and the disguise of his friend, the Marquis de la Mota, he treats Donna Anna, the daughter of the Commander de Ulloa, as he had treated Isabella. He then kills the Commander, and anew takes flight into the country, where he meets Aminta, who also falls a victim to his usual method of promising marriage. Don Juan secretly returns to Sevilla, and sees in the church the mausoleum of the Commander de Ulloa, bearing the inscription: "Here the most loyal of gentlemen awaits until God shall avenge him on a traitor." Don Juan and his servant, Catalinon, insult him and invite him to supper. The statue makes its appearance, and requests Don Juan to come to feast with him the next evening at ten o'clock in the chapel. He goes, and the seventeenth scene of the third day shows us the funeral feast, in which Don Juan and the statue sup on scorpions and vipers, drink gall and vinegar; and in which, finally, the libertine repents, and asks for a priest to be confessed and to receive absolution. The last scene of the play represents the Alcazar at Sevilla, where the king repairs the crimes of Don Juan by giving all his victims away in marriage, and commands the tomb and statue of the Commander to be brought to Madrid, to remain there as a warning for all time. The Spanish Don Juan is not a heartless and deliberate seducer, a thorough

unbeliever but an easy-going fellow, swayed by his passion, who does not repent because he thinks he has sufficient time for it, and at the final catastrophe proves himself a good Roman Catholic. Moreover, he meets the statue, not because he disbelieves in miracles, but because he has given his word to come, and "the dead man might otherwise have the right to call (him) me infamous." The impression which the Spanish play leaves on the mind is eminently a religious one, and must have been strongly felt at the time it was written,—a feeling enhanced by the scene in the chapel, with the moonlight shining through the stained glass windows, and the chorus singing: "Let those who flee from the punishments of God, know that there is no term nor debt which must not be paid. No mortal living should say, 'I have time before me,' for the time of repentance is so short."

From Spain, this drama went to Italy, where Onifrio Giliberti wrote an imitation of the Spanish play, called *Il Convitato di pietra*, and which was performed in 1652, in which Don Juan appears as a high-born free-lover, making fun of everything, and even of the gods. In 1657, the Italian actors of Torelli, who played at the Théâtre du petit Bourbon, in Paris, gave a harlequinade, based on Giliberti's imitation. This piece was full of broad fun; and Arlequin, the servant, is the principal character, whose chief business seems to be to crack jokes and to indulge in practical horse-play.

The actor Dorimond, in 1658, translated the Italian play for the comedians of Mademoiselle (see Prefatory Memoir, Vol. I.), who were then at Lyons, and brought it to Paris in 1661. The translator made a blunder in the very title of the piece. *Il convitato* means "The guest;" but Dorimond thought it meant "feast," which was in old French *convive*, and in Italian *convito*, and thus gave to his piece the title, *Le Festin de Pierre*, the Stone Feast. This play was printed only in 1665, after the great success which Molière's comedy obtained. Villiers also versified an imitation of Giliberti's comedy for the actors of the Hôtel de Bourgogne, with the same title as Dorimond's, and which was printed in 1660. It is probable that the Spanish actors, who appeared in France in 1659, on the occasion of the marriage of Louis XIV., with the Infanta Maria Theresa, had represented the original Spanish play.

Four years after Molière's *Don Juan, ou le Festin de Pierre*—for he kept the old title as well—had been performed, a certain actor, Rosimond, wrote for the Théâtre du Marais *Le Nouveau Festin de Pierre, ou l'Alhée foudroyé*, in which he made of Don Juan a tiresome controversialist.

Don Juan was played from February 15th, 1665, until the 20th of March of the same year; but produced so much irritation and remarks that several scenes,—for example, that between the poor man and Don Juan, and the boldest remarks in the dialogue between Don Juan and Sganarelle, had to be suppressed at once. It may even be supposed that Molière received a hint not to play the piece again; for after the 20th of March it disappeared for a long time from the scene.

In the month of April 1665, a pamphlet appeared, called *Observations sur une Comédie de Molière intitulée le Festin de Pierre*, and written by a clergyman called de Rochemont. It passed through three or four editions, which followed one another in quick succession, and is written in a good style, but full of the most bitter *animus* against our author. It faintly praises Molière, admits that he has some talent for farce, that he speaks passable French, translates Italian pretty well, and does not copy badly other authors; but states that he is always the same, although the

public should be indulgent to those who try to amuse them. If Molière had, in the *Précieuses*, only criticised the little doublets, and the prodigious quantity of ribbands, nobody would have attacked him, or been indignant at him; but to make fun of religion, and openly to display scepticism, is too bad for a mere buffoon. *Don Juan* has caused a public scandal, which is the greater because it was performed in the house of a Christian prince, and in the presence of so many wise and pious magistrates. Whilst the greatest and most religious monarch in the world tries to destroy heresy, and to establish real devotion, Molière raises altars to impiety; his purpose is to ruin men whilst making them laugh; the malicious ingenuousness of his Agnès has corrupted more maidens than the most licentious writings; *Sganarelle* teaches how to make cuckolds, and *The School for Wives* how to debauch them. In fact, he first destroys the morals of men, and then their religion. To use his own words: "he does not mind if people criticise his pieces, so that they come to see them"¹ and pay for their places. Nothing more impious has ever appeared than *Tartuffe* and *Don Juan*; even Pagan emperors condemned to death those who ridiculed religion. It is to be hoped that our great Prince will put a stop to this: "Deluge, plague and famine are the consequences of Atheism; when Heaven resolves to punish it, it pours out upon us all the vials of its wrath to make the chastisement more impressive. The wisdom of the King will divert those misfortunes which impiety wishes to draw upon us; it will establish the altars which it endeavours to overturn; we shall see everywhere religion triumph over its enemies, under the sway of this pious and invincible monarch, the glory of his age, the ornament of his states, the beloved of his subjects, the terror of the unbelievers, the delight of the whole human race. *Vivat rex, vivat in æternum!* May the King live, but may he live eternally for the good of the Church, for the tranquillity of the State, and for the happiness of all nations!"

These observations were answered in a *Lettre sur les Observations d'une Comédi du Sieur Molière, intitulée Le Festin de Pierre*, published also in 1665, in which the author defends Molière; says that he is more than a mere buffoon; that the very fact that that most religious King, Louis XIV., allowed *Don Juan* to be acted before him, proves that there is no harm in the play; that people ought not to accuse Molière of infidelity without sufficient proof; that in this play virtue is rewarded and vice punished; that in *Don Juan*, as well as in *Tartuffe*, hypocrisy only is attacked, but not real religion; and that, finally, if we are to be visited by all those plagues prophesied by the *Observateur*, the hypocrites will be the first to feel the effects of them.

Another very badly written pamphlet was likewise published in the same year, in defence of Molière, having for its title *Réponse aux Observations touchant Le Festin de Pierre de Monsieur de Molière*.

In 1667, *Don Juan* re-appeared on the French stage, but remodelled and put into verse by Thomas Corneille. This version, or rather perversion, of Molière's play was acted until the 15th of January 1847, when the comedy, as originally written, was again performed, and continues to be so until the present day.

Sir Aston Cokain wrote *The Tragedy of Ovid*, which was printed in 1662, but which was never acted. In this, the passage of Captain Hannibal (*Don Juan*) inviting the dead body of Helvidius to supper, and the

¹ See *The School for Wives Criticised*, Vol. I., Scene vii.

Spectre accepting it, and the latter afterwards inviting Hannibal to supper, as well as the final catastrophe, seem borrowed from the Italian play *Il Atheisto fulminato*, from which Molière appears also to have taken several scenes. In any case, Cokain cannot have borrowed from the French author, whose play was not brought out until February 15th, 1665.

Thomas Shadwell (see Introductory Notice to *The Bores*, Vol. I., has, in *The Libertine*, acted at Dorset Garden in 1676, partly imitated Molière. This play is dedicated to William, Duke of Newcastle; and in the preface it is admitted that "there are an Italian, a Spanish, and four French plays on the story of Don Juan, the character of the libertine, and consequently those of his friends are borrowed; but all the plot till the latter end of the fourth act is new." This seems not quite true; for in the second act of Shadwell's comedy there are evidently some scenes borrowed from Molière. In the English play, Don Juan loves wickedness, and philosophizes about it to his two friends, Don Lopez and Don Antonio; he causes his own father to be murdered, and, on the whole, behaves rather like a madman. The scenes between Don Juan, The Statue, and Sganarelle—in the English play—are pretty closely followed from Molière, but made more horrible. Shadwell's comedy met with great success, although our author states: "there being no act in it which cost me above five days writing, and the two last (the play-house having great occasion for a play) were both written in four days." The Prologue opens thus:

"Our Author sent me hither for a Scout,
To spy what bloody Criticks were come out. ~
Those Piccaroons in Wit, wh' infest this Road,
And snap both Friend and Foe that come abroad.
This savage Party crueller appears
Than in the Channel Ostend Privateers.
You in this Road, or sink or plunder all; ~
Remorseless as a Storm on us you fall.
But as a Merchant, when by Storm distres'd,
Flings out his bulky goods to save the rest,
Hoping a Calm may come, he keeps the best.
In this black Tempest which o'er us impends,
Near Rocks and Quicksands, and no Port of Friends,
Our Poet gives this over to your Rage,
The most irregular Play upon the Stage."

Congreve has imitated, in *Love for Love* (Act i., Scene 1), acted for the first time in Little Lincoln's Inn Fields in 1695, the scene from Molière's *Don Juan* between M. Dimanche and the hero of the play. *Love for Love* appears to me to be a free imitation of three of Molière's plays; the scenes between Valentine and Jeremy are something like those between Don Juan and Sganarelle, from *Don Juan*; Scandal, Tattle, Mrs. Foresight, and Mrs. Frail, are followed from similar characters in *The Misanthrope*; whilst Foresight seems Harpagon from *The Miser*. *Love for Love* was, curiously enough, acted entirely by women June 25th, 27th, and 29th, 1705; the two first times most likely at Lincoln's Inn Fields, the last, at the Haymarket.

At the Royalty Theatre was acted, in 1787, a tragic pantomimical entertainment, called *Don Juan, or the Libertine Destroyed*, composed by M. Delpini; the songs, duets, and choruses by Mr. Reeve. At Drury Lane, in 1790, was played a pantomime-ballet of the same name.

Moncrieff wrote an operatic extravaganza, in two acts, called *Giovanni in London, or the Libertine Reclaimed*. "Don Giovanni having, like his

noble compeers, made the *grand tour*, and also acquired additional notoriety, by being forcibly ejected from that place where Telemachus went to look for his father, jumps into Charon's boat, re-passes the river Styx, and pays a visit to London, for the purpose, like the man when he opened the oysters, of astonishing the *natives*. In this expedition he is accompanied by his valet, pimp, and bottle-holder, Leporello; and whether at the Magpie and Punch-Bowl, in the Borough—in St. Giles', with Mesdames Drainemdry, Porous, and Simpkins—at Chalk Farm, with Finikin and Popinjay—in the King's Bench, with Shirk, Sponge, and other gentlemen who pay their creditors by a bill at three months—or at Charing Cross, in company with King Charles on horseback—their adventures are equally wonderful and entertaining." This piece was originally written for the Olympic Theatre, but was played in 1827 both at Drury Lane and at Covent Garden. In the last mentioned theatre the late Madame Vestris created a certain furore, in acting the hero of the piece.

Thomas Dibdin wrote a similar piece, called *Don Giovanni, or the Spectre on Horseback*, a burlesque on Mozart's celebrated opera, which was acted at Bath, on the 19th of May, 1819.

On the 22d of December, 1821, there was performed at Drury Lane, an opera called *Giovanni in Ireland*, in which Madame Vestris again played the hero; but it met with little success.

Goldfine, the Italian dramatist, also wrote a *Don Juan, or the Libertine*, a comedy in five acts, and in blank verse, of which he says in his Autobiography, "Having learned enough of French to be able to read it, I found that Molière and Thomas Corneille had employed their talents on the same subject; I undertook also to give a similar treat to my countrymen, that I might be on somewhat decent terms with the devil. I could not, it is true, give the same title to it; for in my piece, the statue of the Commander neither speaks, moves, nor goes to sup in town. . . . I could not dispense with the thunder which strikes Don Juan, because the wicked deserve to be punished; but I brought about the event in such a way that it might either be an immediate effect of the wrath of God, or might proceed from a combination of secondary causes under the direction of the laws of providence."

Mozart also composed the music to an opera called *Don Giovanni*,—in which the Italian librettist, Delponte, has followed rather the old Spanish play than Molière,—and which is known and admired wherever music is cultivated.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DON JUAN, *son to Don Louis.*

DON CARLOS, }
DON ALONZO, } *brothers to Donna Elvira.*

DON LOUIS, *father to Don Juan.*

THE STATUE OF THE COMMANDER.²

GUZMAN, *gentleman-usher to Donna Elvira.*

M. DIMANCHE, *a tradesman.*

SGANARELLE,³ }
VIOLETTE, } *servants to Don Juan.*
RAGOTIN, }

PIERROT, *a countryman.*

LA RAMÈE, *a swashbuckler.*

A POOR MAN.

Don Juan's FOLLOWERS.

Don Carlos' and Don Alonzo's FOLLOWERS.

A GHOST.

DONNA ELVIRA, *wife to Don Juan.*

CHARLOTTE, }
MATHURINE, } *country-women.*

² A Commander was a member of the military-religious order of the Knights of Malta, or of any other similar order, who, by virtue of long or meritorious services, had the control of a manor, with lands and tenements appertaining thereto, part of the proceeds of which had to be used for the benefit of that order, and part for himself. Such a manor was called a commandery or preceptory.

³ Molière played this part. In the inventory taken after the author's death, we see: "a deep gold-coloured satin little jerkin, with long skirts, a linen jacket with gold facings, a doublet of flowered satin for the *Festin de Pierre*." I doubt if this was part of the dress of Sganarelle.

DON JUAN.

OR,

THE FEAST WITH THE STATUE.

(DON JUAN; OU, LE FESTIN DE PIERRE.)

ACT I.

SCENE I.—(*A Palace*).—SGANARELLE, GUZMAN.

SGAN. (*With a snuff-box in his hand*). Whatever Aristotle and all the philosophers may say, nothing can be compared to tobacco: all respectable men are very fond of it, and he who lives without tobacco deserves not to live. It not only enlivens and clears a man's brains, but it also teaches men to be virtuous; through it one learns to become a respectable man. Do you not see plainly, as soon as we take it, how affable we become with every one, and how delighted we are to give right and left, wherever we are? We do not even wait till it is asked for, but we forestall people's wishes; so true it is that tobacco inspires all those who take it with sentiments of honour and virtue.⁴ But enough of this; let us rather resume our discourse. So, then, dear Guzman, Donna Elvira, your mistress, being

⁴ Tobacco had been in use for more than a century. It was introduced into France, in the year 1560, by Jean Nicot, lord of Villemain, ambassador of Francis II. at the Court of Madrid, who made a present of it to the Queen, Catherine de Medici; hence its first name was in French *Herbe de la reine* or *Nicotiane*.

surprised at our departure, is come after us ; and my master has touched her heart so intensely, that you say she cannot exist without coming here in search of him. Between ourselves, do you wish me to tell you my thoughts ? I am afraid her love will be ill repaid, that her journey to this city will produce little fruit, and that you would have gained just as much had you never stirred from the spot.

GUZ. And pray, Sganarelle, what can inspire you with a terror which so augurs ill ? Has your master opened his heart to you on that subject, and did he tell you that his coldness for us obliged him to leave ?

SGAN. Not at all ; but, by what I see, I know pretty well how things are ; and, although he has not yet said anything to me, I could almost lay a wager that the business is tending that way. I may, perhaps, be mistaken ; but yet, in such cases, experience has given me some insight.

GUZ. What ! Can this sudden departure be caused by the faithlessness of Don Juan. Could he insult so greatly the chaste love of Donna Elvira ?

SGAN. No, no, he is young yet, and has not the courage to . . .

GUZ. Can a man of his rank commit so base an action !

SGAN. Oh yes, his rank ! The idea is really admirable ; he would forbear on that account !

GUZ. But he is restrained by the holy bonds of matrimony.

SGAN. Ah ! poor Guzman, my good friend, believe me, you do not know yet what sort of man Don Juan is.

GUZ. Truly, I do not know what sort of a man he may be, if he has acted so treacherously towards us. I do not understand how, after so much love and impatience shown, such homage urged upon us, such vows, sighs, and tears, so many passionate letters, such ardent protestations and repeated oaths, such transports in short, and such outbursts, forcing even, in his passion, the sacred obstacle of a nunnery, in order to get Donna Elvira in his power ; I do not understand, I say, how after all this, he should have the heart to break his word.

SGAN. I have no great difficulty in understanding this ; and, if you knew the fellow, you would think the thing

easy enough for him. I do not say that he has changed his sentiments for Donna Elvira ; I am not yet quite sure of it. You know that he ordered me to set out before him ; and since his arrival, he has not spoken to me ; but, by way of precaution, I tell you, between ourselves, that Don Juan, my master, is one of the greatest scoundrels upon earth, a madman, a dog, a demon, a Turk, a heretic, who believes neither in Heaven, hell, nor devil, who passes his life like a regular brute beast, one of Epicurus' swine, a true Sardanapalus, who shuts his ears against all Christian remonstrances that can be made to him, and considers all that we believe as so much nonsense. You tell me that he has married your mistress ; believe me, he would have done more to satisfy his passion, and would, besides herself, have married you, her dog and her cat into the bargain. It costs him nothing to contract a marriage ; he uses no other snares to entrap the fair sex ; and he marries whomsoever he can get hold of. A lady, gentlewoman, citizen's daughter, countrywoman ; he thinks nothing too hot or too cold for him ; and if I were to tell you the names of all those whom he has married in different places, I would not have finished until night.⁵ You seem surprised and change colour at what you hear ; this is a mere outline of the man ; and many other touches would be required to finish the picture. Let it be sufficient that some day or other Heaven must needs overwhelm him with its wrath ; that I had much better be with the devil than with him, and that he makes me witness so many horrors, that I could wish him already I do not know where ! If a great lord is a wicked man, it is a terrible thing. I must be faithful to him in spite of myself ; fear moves me instead of zeal, curbs my sentiments, and often compels me to applaud what I detest from my very soul. See, there he comes to take a walk in this palace ; let us separate. One word more ; I have trusted you, and not

⁵ Molière has not given a list of the names of the different wives of Don Juan, to be found in the Italian piece which he has freely followed, and also in several other plays of that time. Perhaps he thought the idea too hackneyed. In Mozart's opera, *Don Giovanni*, the list of the *mille e tre* conquests of the hero, as sung by Leporello, beginning *Madamina il catalogo e questo, Delle belle ch' amo il padron mio*, produces a great and admirable effect.

concealed anything from you ; it came a little too quickly out of my mouth ; but, if ever anything should reach his ears, I shall declare flatly that you have told a lie.

SCENE II.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE.

D. JU. What man was just now talking to you. He has very much the air, it seems to me, of honest Guzman, a servant of Donna Elvira.

SGAN. It is something very like it.

D. JU. What ! it is he ?

SGAN. The very man.

D. JU. And how long has he been in town ?

SGAN. Since last night.

D. JU. And why has he come ?

SGAN. I believe you may imagine well enough what disturbs him.

D. JU. Our departure, no doubt ?

SGAN. The good man is quite offended, and asked me the cause of it.

D. JU. And what answer did you give him ?

SGAN. That you had not told me anything about it.

D. JU. But, prithee, what do you think of it ? What do you imagine about this affair ?

SGAN. I ? I believe, without wronging you, that you have some new love affair in your head.

D. JU. Do you think so ?

SGAN. Yes.

D. JU. Upon my word, you are not mistaken ; and I must confess another object has driven Elvira from my thoughts.

SGAN. Oh ! good Heavens ! I know my Don Juan at my fingers' ends, and that your heart is the most restless in the world ; it delights to rove from one set of chains to another and never likes to stay in one spot.

D. JU. And tell me, do you not think I am right in acting in such a manner ?

SGAN. Oh ! sir . . .

D. JU. What ! Speak.

SGAN. Certainly, you are right, if you have a mind to it ; no one can say anything against it. But, if you had not a mind to it, it might perhaps be another affair

D. JU. Well, then, I give you leave to speak, and to tell me your sentiments.

SGAN. In that case, sir, I must frankly tell you that I do not approve of your goings on, and that I think it very wicked to make love to every one, as you do.

D. JU. What! Would you have a man bind himself to remain with the first object which has caught him, renounce the world for her sake, and have no more eyes for anybody? A nice thing to pique one's self upon the false honour of being faithful, to bury one's self for ever in one passion, and to be dead from our very youth to all other beauties that may strike us! No, no, constancy is fit only for fools; every handsome woman has a right to charm us, and the advantage of being first met with ought not to rob others of the just pretensions which they all have upon our hearts. As for me beauty delights me wherever I meet with it, and I easily give myself up to that sweet violence with which it hurries us along. It does not matter if I am engaged; the love I feel for one fair does not induce me to do injustice to others; I have eyes to see the merit of all, and pay to every one the homage and tribute which nature demands from us. However it be, I cannot refuse my heart to any lovely creature I behold; and as soon as a handsome face asks it of me, if I had ten thousand hearts, I would give them all. Budding inclinations, after all have a charm which is indescribable, and all the pleasure of love is in variety. One takes great delight in reducing, by a hundred contrivances, the heart of a young beauty; in seeing every day the gradual progress one has made; in combating with transports, tears, and sighs, the innocent bashfulness of a mind which can hardly prevail upon itself to surrender; in demolishing, inch by inch, all the little resistance she can oppose to us; in conquering the scruples upon which she prides herself, and in leading her gently whither we have a mind to bring her. But when we are once her master, there is nothing more to say, nothing more to wish for; all the charms of the passion are over, and we are lulled asleep in the tranquillity of such a love, if some new object does not awaken our desires and present to our heart the attractive charms of a conquest still to make.

In short, there is nothing so pleasant as to triumph over the resistance of a fair maiden; I possess, in such a case, the ambition of a conqueror, who flies perpetually from one victory to another, and can never resolve to set bounds to his wishes. Nothing can restrain the impetuosity of my desires; I feel I have a heart that could love all the world, and like Alexander, I could wish for other worlds, wherein to extend my amorous conquests.⁶

SGAN. Ods' boddikins, how you talk! It seems that you have learned this by heart; you speak like a book.

D. JU. What have you to say to this?

SGAN. Upon my word, I have to say . . . I do not know what to say; for you turn things in such a manner that it seems you are right, and yet it is certain you are not. I had the finest thoughts in the world, but your speech has put them all out of my head. Let me alone; another time I shall write down all my arguments, to dispute with you.

D. JU. Do so.

SGAN. But, sir, would it be included in the permission you have given me, if I were to tell you that I am somewhat scandalized at the life which you lead.

D. JU. How? What life do I lead?

SGAN. A very good one. But, for example, to see you marry every month, as you do!

D. JU. Can there be anything more agreeable?

SGAN. True, I should think it very agreeable and very amusing, and I should myself like it well enough if there were no harm in it; but, sir, to make thus a jest of a sacred mystery, and . . .

D. JU. Well, be it so; it is an affair between Heaven and me, and I can very well settle it without your troubling yourself about it.

SGAN. Upon my word, sir, I have always heard it said that to jest about Heaven is wicked jesting, and that libertines always come to a bad end.

⁶ Lovelace, in Richardson's *Clarissa Harlowe*, expresses nearly the same sentiments, and writes, "the *Debellare superbos* should be my motto; I always considered opposition and resistance as a challenge to do my worst."

D. JU. Hullo, Master Fool! You know I told you that I do not like persons who remonstrate.

SGAN. Therefore I do not speak to you! Heaven forbid! You know what you do; and, if you are a libertine⁷ you have your reasons: but there are certain punny coxcombs in this world who are so without knowing why or wherefore, who pretend to be free-thinkers, because they think it becomes them. Had I a master of that kind, I would tell him plainly to his face: "Dare you thus jest with Heaven, and do you not tremble to laugh, as you do, at things the most sacred? Does it become you, you little earthworm, you mannikin that you are (I speak to the master I mentioned), does it become you to wish to turn into ridicule what all men revere? Do you think that because you are a man of rank, because you wear a fair and well-curled wig, have some feathers in your hat, a gold-laced coat, and flame-coloured ribbons⁸ (I do not speak to you but to the other)—do you think, I say, that you are a cleverer man for all this, that you may be allowed to do everything, and that no one should dare to tell you the truth? Learn from me, who am your servant, that Heaven, sooner or later, punishes the impious; that a wicked life leads to a wicked death; that libertines never come to a good end, and that . . ."

D. JU. Silence!

SGAN. Why, what is the matter?

D. JU. The matter is, that I inform you that a certain beauty has got possession of my heart, and that, captivated by her charms, I followed her to this city.

SGAN. And you have no fear, sir, of the consequences of the death of that Commander whom you killed six months ago?

⁷ The French word *libertin* had formerly not only the signification which it has in our days, but meant also a free-thinker; and was often said of a man or woman who did not like to submit to the ordinary rules and regulations of society. Libertine was also formerly applied, in English, "to certain heretical sects, and intended to mark the licentious liberty of their creed and forms," says Trench, in his *Select Glossary*, "a striking evidence of the extreme likelihood that he who has no restraints on his belief will ere long have none upon his life."

⁸ Sganarelle describes the apparel Don Juan wears, without daring to name him.

D. JU. Why should I be afraid? Did I not kill him honourably?

SGAN. Very honourably; it could not have been done more so, and he would be wrong to complain.

D. JU. I had my pardon for this affair.

SGAN. Yes; but this pardon does not perhaps stifle the resentment of relatives and friends, and . . .

D. JU. Pooh! Let us not think of any harm that may happen to us, but only of what can give us pleasure. The person of whom I speak to you is a young bride, one of the prettiest in the world, who was brought hither by the very man she is to marry. Chance threw this pair of lovers in my way, three or four days before they set out on their journey. Never did I see two people so satisfied with each other; and displaying so much love. The visible tenderness of their mutual flame moved me; I felt it deeply, and my love began by jealousy. Yes, I could not at first sight endure to see them so happy together. Resentment kindled my desire, and I thought it would cause me very great pleasure to disturb their intimacy, and to sever that union by which the delicate feelings of my heart were offended; but hitherto all my efforts have been in vain, and I have recourse to the final stratagem. This intended spouse is to-day to treat the object of his love with a sail. Without having said anything to you, all things are prepared for gratifying my passion. I have freighted a little vessel, and engaged men with whose assistance I can easily carry off the fair.

SGAN. Ah! sir . . .

D. JU. What?

SGAN. You have done quite right, and you take things in the proper way. There is nothing in the world like satisfying all one's desires.

D. JU. Get ready to come along with me, and take care, you yourself, to bring all my arms, so that . . . (*He sees Donna Elvira*). Oh! most unlucky meeting. Traitor, you did not tell me she was here herself.

SGAN. Sir, you did not so much as ask me.

D. JU. Is she mad not to have changed her dress, and to come here in her riding-habit?⁹

⁹ This remark of Don Juan on beholding a woman whom he has aban-

SCENE III.—DONNA ELVIRA, DON JUAN, SGANARELLE.

D. EL. Will you do me the favour, Don Juan, to notice me? And may I at least hope that you will deign to turn your eyes this way?

D. JU. I confess to you, madam, that I am surprised, and that I did not expect you here.

D. EL. Yes, I see plainly that you did not expect me here; and you are indeed surprised, but quite otherwise than I hoped for; the manner in which you appear convinces me fully of what I refused to believe. I am astonished at my simplicity, and at the weakness of my heart in doubting a treachery so strongly confirmed by appearances. I was simple-minded enough, I confess it, or rather foolish enough, to be willing to deceive myself, and to take pains to contradict my eyes and my judgment. I sought for reasons to excuse to my affection that diminution of friendship which it discovered in you; and I purposely invented a hundred legitimate excuses for so hurried a departure, to clear you from the crime of which my reason accused you. All that my just suspicions could daily say to me was in vain; I would not listen to their voice, which represented you to me as a criminal; I took a pleasure in giving ear to a thousand ridiculous fancies, which depicted you to my heart as innocent; but, at last, your reception permits me no longer to doubt, and the glance with which you received me informs me of many more things than I would wish to know. I shall be glad, nevertheless, to hear from your own mouth the reasons for your departure. Pray, speak, Don Juan, let us hear in what way you can justify yourself.

D. JU. Madam, there is Sganarelle, who knows why I went away.

SGAN. (*Whispering to Don Juan*). I, sir! By your leave, I know nothing of the matter.

doned, shows that he has neither feelings nor heart. Louis XIV. then (1665) in the height of his passion for Mademoiselle de la Vallière, behaved afterwards to her as badly as Don Juan does to Donna Elvira. It has many a time been stated that the King was neither coarser nor more unfeeling than his contemporaries. We have only to look at the *Mémoires du Duc de Saint Simon*, to see what at least one of them thought of *le Grand Monarque*. But Louis XIV. was no sceptic, and during the latter part of his reign he became even a fanatic and a persecutor.

D. EL. Well, Sganarelle, speak. It does not matter from whose mouth I hear his reasons.

D. JU. (*Making signs to Sganarelle to draw near him*). Come, speak then to the lady.

SGAN. (*Whispering to Don Juan*.) What would you have me say?

D. EL. Come hither, since he will have it so, and tell me the causes of so sudden a departure.

D. JU. Why do you not answer?

SGAN. (*Whispering to Don Juan*). I have nothing to answer. You make fun of your very humble servant.

D. JU. Will you answer, I say?

SGAN. Madam . . .

D. EL. What?

SGAN. (*Turning towards his master*). Sir . . .

D. JU. (*Threatening him*). If . . .

SGAN. Madam, the conqueror, Alexander, and the other worlds, are the cause of our departure. That sir, is all I can say.

D. EL. Will you be pleased, Don Juan, to explain to me these beautiful mysteries?

D. JU. Madam, to say the truth . . .

D. EL. Fy! how badly you defend yourself for a courtier, who should be accustomed to these sort of things! I pity you to see you so confused. Why do you not arm your brow with a noble impudence? Why do you not swear that you entertain still the same feelings for me; that you always love me with an unparalleled affection, and that nothing but death can sever you from me? Why do you not tell me that affairs of the greatest consequence compelled you to set out without informing me of it; that, much against your will, you must stay here for some time; and that I need only return whence I came, with the assurance that you will follow me as soon as possible; that it is certain you are very anxious to rejoin me, and that, whilst you are absent from me, you endure the pangs of a body separated from the soul? That is the way to defend yourself; but not to stand thunderstruck as you do.

D. JU. I must confess, madam, that I possess not a talent for dissimulation, but am sincere at heart. I will not tell you that I entertain still the same feelings for you,

and that I am very anxious to rejoin you, since it is certain that I came away only to avoid you; not for the reasons you imagine, but from a pure motive of conscience, and because I thought I could not live with you any longer without sin. I felt some scruples, madam; and the eyes of my mind were opened to what I was doing. I reflected that, in order to marry you, I took you from the precincts of a convent, that you broke vows which engaged you elsewhere, and that Heaven is very jealous of such things. I was seized with repentance, and dreaded the wrath of Heaven. I thought our marriage was only adultery in disguise; that it would bring down upon us some calamity, and that, in short, I ought to endeavour to forget you, and to give you an opportunity of returning to your former obligations. Would you oppose so holy a design, madam, and would you have me expose myself to the vengeance of Heaven by retaining you; that by . . .

D. EL. Ah! wicked wretch! now I know you thoroughly; and to my misfortune I know you when it is too late, and when such a knowledge can only serve to make me despair. But be assured that your crime will not remain unpunished, and that the same Heaven which you mock will revenge your perfidy.

D. JU. Sganarelle, Heaven!

SGAN. Oh, yes, we care much for that.

D. JU. Madam . . .

D. EL. It is enough. I do not wish to hear anything more. I even blame myself for having already heard too much. It is meanness to have our shame explained too clearly, and in such cases, a noble heart should, at the very first word, resolve what to do. Do not expect me to break out into reproaches and opprobrious language; no, no, my wrath does not spend itself in vain words; it reserves all its ardour for vengeance. I tell you once more, Heaven will punish you, wretch, for the wrong you have done me; and if you have nothing to fear from Heaven, fear at least the anger of an injured woman.

SCENE IV.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE.

SGAN. (*Aside*). If he should ever feel some remorse.

D. JU. (*After some pause*). Let us go and think of the execution of our amorous enterprise.

SGAN. (*Alone*) Oh! what an abominable master I am forced to serve!

ACT II.

(*A Landscape near the sea shore*).

SCENE I.—CHARLOTTE, PIERROT.¹⁰

CHAR. By Jingo, Pierrot, you were there just in the nick of time.

PIER. 'Sbobs, they were within an ace of being drowned, both of them.

CHAR. Was it the great storm this morning that upset them in the sea?

PIER. Look you, Charlotte, I shall tell you outright how it happened; for, as the saying is, I saw them first, first I saw them. I was on the sea-shore, I and fat Lucas, and we were a-larking together with clods of earth, that we threw at one another's heads, for you very well know that fat Lucas likes to be a-larking, and so do I sometimes too. So as we were a-larking, for we were a-larking, I perceived a distance off something that stirred in the water, and that came bobbing towards us. I looked fixedly at it, but all of a sudden I saw that I saw nothing more. Ay, Lucas, says I, I think that there are men a-swimming down there. Oh, says he, you have been at the burial of a cat, your eyes are dazed. 'Sdeath, says I, my eyes are not dazed; they are men. No, no, says he to me, you are purblind. Would you wager, says I, that I am not purblind, says I, and that they are two men, says I, who are swimming straight this way, says I. Znigs, says he, I lay

¹⁰ Charlotte and Pierrot speak in a provincial dialect, which was quite a novelty on the stage in the time of Molière; we shall give an example of this:—CHARLOTTE: *Notre dinse! Piarrot, tu l' es trouvé là bien à point.* PIERROT. *Parquienne! il ne s'en est pas fallu l' époisseur d'une éplingue, qu'il ne se sayant nayés tous deux.* CHARLOTTE. *C'est donc le coup de vent d' à matin qui les avait ranvarsés dans la mar?* &c. As it would be impossible to render this in an equivalent dialect, I have translated it in plain English.

a wager they are not. Well, come on, says I, I will lay you tenpence on it? Marry will I, says he, and to show thee, there is the money down on the nail, says he. I was neither a fool nor a gaby; I boldly threw down upon the ground four silver pennies and sixpenny worth of ha'pence, as freely, i' faith, as if I had drank off a glass of wine; for I am very venturesome, and go on any way. Yet I knew what I did howsomdever. I am not such a fool as I look. We had but just laid the wager when I saw the two men very plainly, who made signs to us to come and fetch them, and I take up the stakes. Come, Lucas, says I, you see that they call us; let us go at once and help them. No, says he, they have made me lose. Then, to cut short my story, I went on so, and at last preached so much to him, that we got into a boat, and then I made so much ado that I got them out of the water, and then I carried them home to the fire, and then they pulled off all their clothes and stripped to dry themselves, and then two more of the same gang came, who had saved themselves quite alone, and then comes Mathurine, and one of them cast sheep's eyes at her. And that is precisely, Charlotte, how all this has happened.

CHAR. Did you not say, Pierrot, that one of them is a great deal handsomer than the rest?

PIER. Ay, he is the master; he must be some great, great man to be sure, for he has gold upon his clothes from top to bottom, and his servants are gentlefolks themselves; but for all his being a great man, he would have been drowned if I had not been there.

CHAR. Lawk a-day!

PIER. Ay, indeed, if it had not been for us he would have had his fill of water.

CHAR. Is he still at your house without his clothes on, Pierrot?

PIER. No, no, they all put on their clothes again before us. Mercy on me, I never saw any of these folks dress themselves before; what a parcel of gimcracks these courtiers wear! I should lose myself in them, and I was quite flabbergasted to see them. Why, Charlotte, they have hair which does not stick to their heads, and, after all, they put it on like a big cap of unspun flax. They have smocks

with sleeves that you and I might get into; instead of breeches they have an apron as large as from this to Easter, instead of doublets they have little tiny waistcoats that do not reach to their middle, and instead of bands a great neck-handkerchief all open-worked with four large tufts of linen hanging down over their stomach. They have bands about their wrists too, and great funnels of lace about their legs, and amongst all this so many ribands, that it is a downright shame. Their very shoes are stuffed with them from one end to the other, and they are made in such a fashion that I should break my neck in them.

CHAR. I' fakins, Pierrot, I must go and see them.

PIER. Oh! Hark you, Charlotte, stay a little first, I have something else to say to you.

CHAR. Well, tell me, what is it?

PIER. Do you not see, Charlotte, that, as the saying is, I must unbosom myself to you? I am in love with you, you know it very well, I am for us being married together; but 's boddikins, I am not pleased with you.

CHAR. How? what's the matter?

PIER. The matter is, to tell the truth, that you vex my very heart.

CHAR. How so?

PIER. Because, by the powers, you do not love me.

CHAR. Ho! ho! Is that all?

PIER. Ay, that is all, and enough too.

CHAR. Law, Pierrot, you always say the same thing to me.

PIER. I always say the same thing to you because it is always the same thing; and if it was not always the same thing I would not always say the same thing.

CHAR. But what do you want? What do you wish?

PIER. Drat it, I would wish you to love me.

CHAR. Why, do I not love you?

PIER. No, you do not love me, and yet I do all I can to make you. I do not mean to reproach you, but I buy ribbons for you of all the pedlars that come about, I risk my neck to go and fetch jackdaws out of their nests for you, I make the piper play for you when your birthday comes; and all this is no more than if I ran my head against the wall. Do ye hear? it is neither fair nor honest not to love folk that love us.

CHAR. But, lawk-a-day, I love you too.

PIER. Ay, very much indeed!

CHAR. What would you have me do then?

PIER. I would have you do as folk do when they love as they ought.

CHAR. Why, do I not love you as I ought?

PIER. No, when that is the case, anyone can see it; people play a thousand little tricks to folk when they love them with all their heart. Look at stout Thomasse, how smitten she is with young Robin; she is always about him to tease him, and never lets him alone. She is always playing him some trick or other, or hits him a rap when she passes by him. The other day, as he was sitting upon a small stool, she comes and pulls it from under him, and down falls he at full length upon the ground. Zounds, that is the way folk do when they are in love; but you never say a word to me, you always stand like a log of wood; I may go by ye twenty times and you never stir to give me the smallest thump, or to say the least thing to me. Upon my word, it is not fair, after all, and you are too cold for folk.

CHAR. What would you have me do? My temper is such, and I cannot alter myself.

PIER. Temper or no temper, when a body loves a body one always gives some small inkling of it.

CHAR. I love you as well as I can, and if you are not satisfied with that, you must go and love somebody else.

PIER. Why there now! I have got what I bargained for. Zooks, if you loved me you would not say that.

CHAR. Why do you come and worrit me so?

PIER. And what harm do I do you? I only ask a little friendship from ye.

CHAR. Well, let me alone then and do not press me so, maybe it will come all of a sudden, without thinking of it.

PIER. Shake hands, then, Charlotte.

CHAR. (*Gives him her hand*). Well, there.

PIER. Promise me that you will do your best to love me more.

CHAR. I will do all that I can, but it must come of itself. Pierrot, is that the gentleman?

PIER. Yes, that is he.

CHAR. Oh! lack-a-day, how nice he is! what a pity it would have been if he had been drowned.

PIER. I shall come again presently; I shall go to take a pint to refresh myself a little after my fatigue.

SCENE II.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE, CHARLOTTE *in the background*.

D. JU. We have failed in our plot, Sganarelle, and this sudden squall has overturned our sloop, as well as the plan we had formed; but, to tell you the truth, the country-wench I have just parted with, makes amends for this misfortune. I have found such charms in her that they have effaced from my mind all the vexation caused by the ill success of our enterprise. This heart must not escape me: I have already disposed it in such a manner that I shall have no need to sigh long in vain.

SGAN. I confess, sir, you astonish me. We have hardly escaped from the jaws of death, and instead of thanking Heaven for the mercy it has granted us, you labour anew to draw down its wrath by your usual whims and your amours . . . (*Seeing Don Juan look angry*). Peace, rascal that you are; you do not know what you are talking of, and my master knows what he does. Come.

D. JU. (*Perceiving Charlotte*). Ha! whence comes this other country-girl? Did you ever see anything prettier? Tell me, do you not think she is as handsome as the other?

SGAN. Certainly. (*Aside*). Another fresh morsel.

D. JU. (*To Charlotte*). Whence this pleasant meeting, fair one? What? are there in these rural spots, amongst these trees and rocks, persons as handsome as you are?

CHAR. As you see, sir.

D. JU. Do you belong to this village?

CHAR. Yes, sir.

D. JU. And do you live there?

CHAR. Yes, sir.

D. JU. What is your name?

CHAR. Charlotte, at your service.

D. JU. Ah! what a beauty! what piercing eyes!

CHAR. Sir, you make me quite ashamed.

D. JU. Oh! do not be ashamed to hear the truth. What do you say, Sganarelle? Can anything be more

agreeable? Turn about a little, please. Oh! what a fine shape. Hold up your head a little, pray. Oh! what a pretty face is this! Open your eyes wide. Oh! how lovely they are. Pray let me see your teeth. Oh! how love-inspiring! And those provoking lips! For my part, I am delighted; I never beheld so charming a person.

CHAR. Sir, you are pleased to say so; I do not know whether you make fun of me.

D. JU. I make fun of you! Heaven forbid! I love you too well for that; I speak to you from the bottom of my heart.

CHAR. I am very much obliged to you if it is so.

D. JU. Not at all; you are not obliged to me for anything I say; you owe it to your beauty alone.

CHAR. Sir, all these words are too fine for me; I have not wit enough to answer you.

D. JU. Sganarelle, just cast a glance on her hands.

CHAR. Fie, sir! they are as black as anything.

D. JU. Oh! what are you saying? They are the fairest in the world; pray, allow me to kiss them.

CHAR. You do me too much honour, sir, and if I had known it just now, I would not have failed to have washed them with bran.

D. JU. Pray, tell me, pretty Charlotte, are you married?

CHAR. No, sir, but I am to be very soon, to Pierrot, our neighbour Simonetta's son.

D. JU. What! should a person like you become the wife of a simple clod-hopper! No, no! that would be a profanation of so much beauty; you were not born to pass your whole life in a village. No doubt you deserve a better fate; Heaven, which very well knows this, has led me hither on purpose to prevent this match, and to do justice to your charms; for, in short, beauteous Charlotte, I love you with all my heart; it only depends upon yourself whether I shall carry you off from this wretched place, and put you in the position you deserve. This passion is doubtless very sudden; but what then; it is owing to your great beauty; I love you as much in one quarter of an hour as I would another in six months.

CHAR. Really, I do not know what to do when you speak. What you say pleases me, and I should very much

like to believe you; but I have always been told that we must never believe gentlemen, and that you, courtiers, are cozeners who think of nothing but of making fools of young girls.

D. JU. I am not one of these.

SGAN. Not at all! Not at all!

CHAR. Look ye, sir, there is no pleasure in being imposed upon. I am but a poor country-wench, but I value honour above everything; I would sooner die than lose my honour.

D. JU. I have a soul so wicked as to impose on such a person as you! I should be so base as to dishonor you! No, no, I am too conscientious for that. I love you, Charlotte, virtuously and honourably; and to show you that I speak the truth, be convinced that I have no other design than to marry you. Can you have any greater proof? Here I am ready, whenever you please, and I call this fellow to be a witness of the promise which I make you.

SGAN. No, no, never fear. He will marry you as much as you please.

D. JU. Ah! Charlotte, I plainly perceive you do not yet know me. You do me great wrong in judging of me by others; and if there are rogues in the world, people who only endeavour to make fools of young women, you ought not to consider me one of them, and never doubt the sincerity of my love; besides, your beauty is a guarantee for everything. When a woman is as handsome as you are she ought never to entertain such fears; believe me, you do not look as if you could be made a fool of. As for me, I protest I would stab myself a thousand times to the heart if I fostered the least thought of betraying you.

CHAR. Good Heavens! I do not know whether you speak the truth or not; but you make people believe you.

D. JU. You do me justice most certainly by believing me; I repeat anew the promise which I have made you. Do you not accept it? Will you not consent to become my wife?

CHAR. Yes, provided my aunt has no objection.

D. JU. Give me your hand then upon it, Charlotte, since you do not object.

CHAR. But at the very least, sir, pray, do not deceive me ; it would be a sin, and you see how honestly I act.

D. JU. What ! you seem to doubt still my sincerity ! Would you have me swear the most frightful oaths ? May Heaven . . .

CHAR. Bless me, do not swear, I believe you.

D. JU. Give me one little kiss, then, as a pledge of your promise.

CHAR. Nay, sir, pray, wait till we are married, and then I shall kiss you as much as you wish.

D. JU. Well, pretty Charlotte, I will do whatever you please ; only give me your hand, and let me, by a thousand kisses, express the rapture I am in . . .

SCENE III.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE, PIERROT,
CHARLOTTE.

PIER. (*Getting between them and pushing away Don Juan*). Gently, sir, if you please, you are getting too warm ; you may get a pleurisy.

D. JU. (*Pushing away Pierrot roughly*). What brings this impertinent fellow here ?

PIER. (*Placing himself between Don Juan and Charlotte*). Hold hard, sir, you must not kiss our wives that are to be.

D. JU. (*Pushing Pierrot again away*). Ha ! what a noise !

PIER. 'Sdeath ! People are not to be pushed thus.

CHAR. (*Taking Pierrot by the arm*). Let him alone, Pierrot.

PIER. What ! let him alone ? I will not, not I !

D. JU. Hah !

PIER. Drat it, because you are a gentleman, you come here to caress our wives under our very noses ? Go and kiss your own.

D. JU. What ?

PIER. What ? (*Don Juan gives him a box on the ear.*) Darn it, do not strike me ; (*another*). Hang it ! (*another.*) Zounds ! (*another*). 'Sblood and wounds ! it is not fair. to beat people ! Is this my reward for saving you from being drowned ?

CHAR. Do not be angry, Pierrot.

PIER. I will be angry; and you are a hussy, to let him cozen you.

CHAR. Oh, Pierrot! it is not as you think. This gentleman will marry me, and you should not be in a passion.

PIER. Ha! But you are engaged to me.

CHAR. That makes no matter, Pierrot. If you love me, should ye not be glad that I am to be made a madam?

PIER. No, I would as soon see you hanged as see you another's.

CHAR. Come, come, Pierrot, do not fret yourself. If I am a madam I shall make you gain something; you shall serve us with butter and cheese.

PIER. Zounds! I shall never serve you with anything, even if you would pay me twice as much. Do not listen thus to what he says. 'Sfish, had I known this just now, I should not have taken him out of the water at all, but I would have given him a good rap upon the head with my oar.

D. JU. (*Coming up to Pierrot to strike him*). What is that you say?

PIER. (*Getting behind Charlotte*). Drat it! I fear no man.

D. JU. (*Coming towards him*). Let me only get hold of you.

PIER. (*Gets on the other side of Charlotte*). I do not care, not I.

D. JU. (*Running after him*). We shall try that.

PIER. (*Getting anew behind Charlotte*). I have seen many a man as good as you.

D. JU. What?

SGAN. Oh, sir, let the poor wretch alone. It is a pity to beat him. (*Placing himself between Don Juan and Pierrot, and addressing the latter*). Harkee, my poor lad, move off, and do not talk to him.

PIER. (*Passing before Sganarelle, and looking boldly at Don Juan*). I will talk to him.

D. JU. (*Lifts up his hand and intends to give Pierrot a box on the ear*). Ha! I shall teach you. (*Pierrot ducks down his head, so that Sganarelle receives it*).

SGAN. (*Looking at Pierrot*). Plague take the booby!



DON JUAN.

Act II.

D. JU. (*To Sganarelle*). That is a reward for your charity.

PIER. Zounds! I shall go and tell her aunt of all her goings-on.

SCENE IV.—DON JUAN, CHARLOTTE, SGANARELLE.

D. JU. (*To Charlotte*). At last I am going to be the happiest of men, and I would not change my happiness for all the world could give me. What pleasures shall we have, when you are my wife, and what . . .

SCENE V.—DON JUAN, CHARLOTTE, MATHURINE,
SGANARELLE.

SGAN. (*Perceiving Mathurine*). So, so.

MATH. (*To Don Juan*). Sir, what are you doing there with Charlotte? Are you courting her too?

D. JU. (*Aside to Mathurine*). No; on the contrary she told me she wished to be my wife, and I told her I was engaged to you.

CHAR. (*To Don Juan*). What is that Mathurine wants with you?

D. JU. (*Aside to Charlotte*). She is jealous of my speaking to you, and would like me to marry her; but I tell her it is you whom I wish to have.

MATH. What! Charlotte . . .

D. JU. (*Aside to Mathurine*). All you can say to her will be of no use; she took this into her head.

CHAR. What then, Mathurine . . .

D. JU. (*Aside to Charlotte*). It is in vain to talk to her, you will not get this whim out of her head.

MATH. Would you . . .

D. JU. (*Aside to Mathurine*). There is no possibility of making her listen to reason.

CHAR. I should like . . .

D. JU. (*Aside to Charlotte*). She is as obstinate as the devil.

MATH. Really . . .

D. JU. (*Aside to Mathurine*). Do not say anything to her, she is a fool.

CHAR. I think . . .

D. JU. (*Aside to Charlotte*). Let her alone, she is silly.

MATH. No, no, I must speak to her.

CHAR. I will hear some of her reasons.

MATH. What . . .

D. JU. (*Aside to Mathurine*). I will lay you a wager that she tells you that I promised to marry her.

CHAR. I . . .

D. JU. (*Aside to Charlotte*). I will bet you anything that she will maintain that I have given her my word to make her my wife.

MATH. Hark you, Charlotte, it is not right to meddle with other folks' bargains.

CHAR. It is not polite to be jealous because the gentleman speaks to me.

MATH. The gentleman saw me first.

CHAR. If he saw you first, he saw me second, and has promised to marry me.

D. JU. (*Aside to Mathurine*). Well, did I not tell you so?

MATH. (*To Charlotte*). Your humble servant, it was me and not you whom he promised to marry.

D. JU. (*Aside to Charlotte*). Did I not guess right?

CHAR. You may tell that to others, if you please, but not to me; it was me he promised to marry, I tell you.

MATH. You make fun of folks; once more it was me he promised to marry.

CHAR. There he is; he can tell you whether I am right.

MATH. There he is; he can give me the lie if I do not speak the truth?

CHAR. Did you promise to marry her?

D. JU. (*Aside to Charlotte*). You are joking.

MATH. Is it true, sir, that you have given your word to be her husband?

D. JU. (*Aside to Mathurine*). Could you entertain such a thought?

CHAR. You see she affirms it.

D. JU. (*Aside to Charlotte*). Let her alone.

MATH. You are witness how positive she is.

D. JU. (*Aside to Mathurine*). Let her say what she likes.

CHAR. No, no, we must know the truth.

MATH. We must have it decided.

CHAR. Yes, Mathurine, I will have the gentleman show you your mistake.¹¹

MATH. Yes, Charlotte, I will have the gentleman make you look foolish.¹²

CHAR. Decide the quarrel, sir, if you please.

MATH. Satisfy us, sir.

CHAR. You shall see.

MATH. And you shall see too.

CHAR. (*To Don Juan*). Speak.

MATH. (*To Don Juan*). Speak.

D. JU. What would you have me say? You both maintain that I have promised to marry you. Does not each of you know the whole business without any necessity for me giving any more explanations? Why should you oblige me to repeat what I have said? Has not the person to whom I really gave the promise sufficient reasons within herself to laugh at what the other says; and ought she to trouble herself, provided I keep my promise? All the speeches do not forward affairs; we must act and not talk, and facts prove more than words. Therefore, that is the only way in which I shall satisfy you, and when I marry, you shall see which of you two has my heart. (*Aside to Mathurine*). Let her believe what she will. (*Aside to Charlotte*). Let her flatter herself in her own imagination. (*Aside to Mathurine*). I adore you. (*Aside to Charlotte*). I am entirely yours. (*Aside to Mathurine*). All faces are ugly in comparison with yours. (*Aside to Charlotte*). When a man has once seen you he cannot bear to look at others. (*Aloud to both*). I have some trifling message to deliver; I shall be back again in a quarter of an hour.¹³

¹¹ The original has *Je veux que monsieur vous montre votre bec jaune*; literally, "I will that the gentleman should show you your yellow beak," This is a phrase which dates from the days when falconry was a favourite sport. A bird with a yellow beak is a very young bird, hence young scholars, greenhorns, were called *béjaunes*, and thus *montrer a quelqu'un son béjaune* or *son bec jaune* came to mean, "to show one he was duped" or foolishly taken in. "Green," instead of *jaune*, yellow, appears to have the same signification in very familiar English phraseology.

¹² In the original we find, *Je veux que monsieur vous rende un peu camuse*, literally, "I wish the gentleman would make you a little flat-nosed," or figuratively, as above. *Avoir un pied de nez*, literally "to have a nose a foot long," has the same meaning when used as a familiar form of speech.

¹³ On reading this scene it seems forced and unnatural, but on the stage, when acted well, it is very amusing.

SCENE I.—CHARLOTTE, MATHURINE, SGANARELLE.

CHAR. (*To Mathurine*). I am the one he loves, however.

MATH. (*To Charlotte*). He will marry me.

SGAN. (*Stopping Charlotte and Mathurine*). Ah ! poor girls, I pity your innocence. I cannot bear to see you run thus to your destruction. Believe me both, do not be imposed upon by the stories he tells you, but stay in your village.

SCENE VII.—DON JUAN, CHARLOTTE, MATHURINE, SGANARELLE.

D. JU. (*In the background, aside*). I would fain know why Sganarelle does not follow me.

SGAN. My master is a knave ; he only wishes to make fools of you ; he has made fools of a good many others ; he marries the whole sex, and . . . (*Seeing Don Juan*). It is false, and whoever tells you this you may tell him he lies. My master does not marry the whole sex ; he is no knave ; he does not intend to deceive you, nor has he ever made a fool of anyone. Oh, stay ! here he is ; ask him himself.

D. JU. (*Looking at Sganarelle, and suspecting him of having said something*). Yes !

SGAN. Sir, as the world is full of backbiters, I was beforehand with them ; and I was telling these girls that if anybody should say anything wrong of you they ought not to believe him, and be sure to tell him that he lied.

D. JU. Sganarelle !

SGAN. (*To Charlotte and Mathurine*). Yes, my master is an honourable man ; I warrant him such.

D. JU. Hem !

SGAN. They are impertinent rascals.

SCENE VIII.—DON JUAN, LA RAMÉE, CHARLOTTE, MATHURINE, SGANARELLE.

LA R. (*Aside to Don Juan*). Sir, I come to tell you that it is not quite safe for you to be here.

D. JU. How so ?

LA R. Twelve men on horseback are in search of you ; they will be here in a moment. I do not know how they have followed you ; but I have learned these tidings from a countryman of whom they inquired, and to whom they

described you. As there is no time to lose, the sooner you leave here the better.

SCENE IX.—DON JUAN, CHARLOTTE, MATHURINE, SGANARELLE.

D. JU. (*To Charlotte and Mathurine*). Urgent business obliges me to leave this place, but I entreat you to remember the promise which I made you ; depend upon it, you shall hear from me before to-morrow evening.

SCENE X.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE.

D. JU. As we are unequally matched we must make use of a stratagem, and cleverly escape from the misfortune that pursues me. Sganarelle you shall put on my clothes, and I . . .

SGAN. Sir, you are joking. To expose me to be killed in your clothes, and . . .

D. JU. Make haste, I do you too much honour. Happy is the servant who has the glory of dying for his master.

SGAN. Thank you for such an honour. (*Alone*). As it is a case of death, grant me the favour, oh Heaven ! not to be taken for another.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—(*A Forest*).—DON JUAN, *dressed as a country gentleman*, SGANARELLE, *as a physician*.

SGAN. Upon my word, sir, acknowledge that I was right, and that we are both wonderfully well disguised. Your first plan would by no means have been opportune ; this conceals us much better than what you would have done.

D. JU. It is true, you look very well ; I cannot imagine where you have unearthed this ridiculous apparel.

SGAN. Yes ! It is the dress of an old physician which was left in pawn in the place where I got it, and it cost me some money to have it. But do you know, sir, that this dress has already obtained me some consideration ; that the people I meet bow to me, and that they come to consult me as an able man ?

D. JU. How?

SGAN. Five or six countrymen and countrywomen, seeing me pass, came to ask my advice upon different diseases.

D. JU. You answered that you knew nothing of the matter?

SGAN. I? Not at all. I wished to keep up the honour of my dress; I speechified about the disease, and gave each of them a prescription.

D. JU. And what remedy did you prescribe?

SGAN. Upon my word, sir, I picked them up where I could. I prescribed at random; it would be a funny thing if the patients should get cured, and come to thank me.

D. JU. And why not? Why should you not have the same privileges as all other physicians? They have no more to do with the recovery of their patients than you have, and all their art is mere pretence. They do nothing but get honour if they succeed; and you may take advantage, as they do, of a patient's good luck, and see attributed to your remedies what is owing to a lucky chance and the powers of nature.¹⁴

SGAN. What, sir? You are also an unbeliever in medicine?

D. JU. It is one of the greatest errors of mankind.¹⁵

SGAN. What! you have no belief in senna, cassia, or antimonial wine?¹⁶

¹⁴ This remark, which Molière has also made use of in *Love is the best Doctor*, is taken from Montaigne's *Essays*. "If good fortune, nature, or some other strange cause, produce something good and healthy within us, it is the privilege of medicine to see it attributed to it; all the fortunate successes which happen to a patient who is under the hands of physicians, are ascribed to it."

¹⁵ This is the first satirical outburst of Molière against the physicians; but as it was put into the mouth of a man who believed in nothing, and attacked everything, the doctors and the public in general did not think they were the expression of the feelings of the author. His next play, *Love is the best Doctor*, undeceived them.

¹⁶ In Molière's time, several works, pamphlets, and satires had been written against, or in favour of a comparative new remedy, a preparation of antimony, called emetic, or antimonial wine. But in 1658, Louis XIV. fell ill at Calais, and was cured by it, so that this medicine became quite the fashion. In 1666, about one year after the first performance of *Don Juan*, the parliament decided that antimony could be used by the physicians of the Faculté.

D. JU. And why would you have me believe in them?

SGAN. You are of a very unbelieving temper. Yet you know how, of late, great noise has been made about anti-monial wine? The miracles it has produced have converted the most incredulous minds; and it is but three weeks ago since I myself, who am speaking to you, saw a marvellous effect of it.

D. JU. What?

SGAN. There was a man who, for six days, was dying; they did not know what more to prescribe for him, and all the remedies produced no effect; at last the doctors took it into their heads to give him an emetic.

D. JU. He recovered, did he not?

SGAN. No, he died.

D. JU. The effect is admirable.

SGAN. I should say so! He could not die for six whole days, and that made him die at once. Could you have anything more efficacious?

D. JU. You are right.

SGAN. But let us drop physic, in which you do not believe, and talk of other things; for this dress inspires me, and I feel in the humour of disputing with you. You know you allow me to dispute, and forbid me only to remonstrate.

D. JU. Well?

SGAN. I would fain know your innermost thoughts. Is it possible that you do not believe at all in Heaven?

D. JU. Let us leave that alone.

SGAN. That means no. And in hell?

D. JU. Eh?

SGAN. The same thing over again. And in the devil, if you please?

D. JU. Yes, yes.

SGAN. Very little also. Do you not believe in a life after this?

D. JU. Ha! ha! ha!

SGAN. I shall have some trouble in converting this man. Tell me what do you think of the *moine bourru*?¹⁷ Eh?

¹⁷ The *moine bourru*, literally, "the gruff monk," was a phantom who, it is said, ran through the streets at night, and beat the belated wayfarers. This connecting a superstition with the highest belief gave great offence

D. JU. A plague on the fool!

SGAN. That is what I cannot bear; for nothing can be more true than the *moine bourru*. I will be hanged if it is not true! People must believe something in this world. What do you believe?

D. JU. What do I believe?

SGAN. Yes.

D. JU. I believe that two and two are four, Sganarelle, and that twice four are eight.

SGAN. A fine belief, and nice articles of faith! As far as I can see, your religion is arithmetic. It cannot be denied that strange follies run in the heads of men, and that those who have studied are often not the wiser for it. As for me, sir, thank Heaven! I have not studied as you have, and no one can boast of ever having taught me anything; but with my small amount of sense, and my little judgment, I can see things more clearly than all books, and I can very well understand that this world which we behold has not sprung up of itself in one night, like a mushroom. I should like to ask you who has created these trees, these rocks, this earth, and this sky above us; and if all this has sprung up of itself. There you are; I take you as an example; there you are: did you make yourself alone, and was not your father obliged to sleep with your mother to make you? Can you see all the inventions of which the human machine is composed without wondering how the one influences the other? these nerves, these bones, these veins, these arteries, these . . . this lung, this heart, this liver, and all these other ingredients to be found there, and which . . . Oh, Lord! interrupt me, if you please. I cannot argue unless I am interrupted. You do not say a single word on purpose, and allow me to go on out of spite.

D. JU. I am waiting for your arguments to be finished.

SGAN. My arguments are that there exists something admirable in man, whatever you may say, which all the philosophers cannot explain. Is it not marvellous that I

in Molière's time, and our author had probably to suppress this passage after the first representations of *Don Juan*. But very likely he only wished to show that people like Sganarelle have a greater belief in superstitions than in the highest abstract truths.

am here, and that I have something in my head which thinks a hundred different things in one moment, and does with my body all that it wishes to do? I wish to clasp my hands, to lift up my arm, to raise my eyes towards Heaven, to bend my head, to move my feet, to go to the right, to the left, forwards, backwards, turn . . . (*He falls down whilst turning round*).

D. JU. There is an end of all your arguing.

SGAN. Zounds! I am a fool to amuse myself in arguing with you; believe what you like; it does not matter a straw to me whether you are damned!

D. JU. I believe that whilst arguing we have lost our way. Call that man we see yonder, and let us ask him our road.¹⁸

SCENE II.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE, A POOR MAN.

SGAN. Hullo! ho! I say, you man! ho! my good fellow! friend, a word with you, pray. Show us the way to the town.

POOR M. You have only to follow that path, gentlemen, and turn to the right when you come to the end of the forest! but I warn you to be upon your guard, for there have been robbers about for some time.

D. JU. I am much obliged to you, friend, and thank you with all my heart.

POOR M. If you would kindly assist me, sir, with some trifle?

D. JU. Ha, ha! your advice is interested, I see.

POOR M. I am a poor man, sir, living alone in this forest these ten years; and I shall pray to Heaven to grant you all kinds of prosperity.

D. JU. Pray Heaven to give you a coat, and do not trouble yourself about other people's business.

¹⁸ Molière intended to print his *Don Juan*, but this was never done. In 1682, eight years after his death, La Grange and Vinot, in the first collected edition of Molière's works, printed this play; but they had to suppress several passages, which were afterwards found in a copy, that belonged to M. de la Reynie, then lieutenant-general of police, and which was discovered only in 1825. Some passages are found only in the editions printed at Amsterdam in 1683, and at Brussels in 1694. None of these has ever before been translated into English. The suppressed words being page 105, "*Don Juan*. Let us leave that alone," until nearly the end of the scene.

SGAN. My good man, you do not know this gentleman ; he only believes that two and two make four, and that twice four are eight.

D. JU. What is your occupation among these trees ?

POOR M. To pray to Heaven for the prosperity of all kind people who give me something.

D. JU. You are pretty well off then ?

POOR M. Alas ! sir, I am as poor as poor can be.

D. JU. You are joking : a man who prays to Heaven every day must be very well off.

POOR M. I assure you, sir, that frequently I have not even a piece of bread to eat.

D. JU. That is strange ; your assiduity is ill rewarded. Ha, ha ! I am going to give you directly a piece of gold, provided you swear a round oath.

POOR M. Oh ! sir, would you wish me to commit such a sin ?

D. JU. Will you gain a piece of gold ? yes or no. Here is one for you, if you swear. There ; now swear.

POOR M. Sir . . .

D. JU. Unless you swear, you shall not get it.

SGAN. Well, well ; swear ever so little ; there is no harm in it.

D. JU. Take it ; here it is ; take it, I tell you ; but swear.

POOR M. No, sir, I would rather die of hunger.

D. JU. There, there ; I give you this piece of gold because you are a human being.¹⁹ (*Looking into the forest*). But what do I see ? One man attacked by three ! The match is too unequal, and I ought not to allow so base an action. (*He draws his sword and hastens to the spot where the attack was going on*).

¹⁹The original has *pour l'amour de l'humanité*, for the love of humanity. *Humanité* often meant with Molière "the quality of being human," and not what it usually means now, "mankind collectively." The passages suppressed in the first printed and uncastrated edition of this play are on page 108, from "I have not even a piece of bread to eat," to, "I would rather die of hunger." The rest of the scene is found only in the Amsterdam edition of 1684. This whole scene caused an immense scandal in the beginning, and Molière was accused of impiety (see Introductory Notice.)

SCENE III.—SGANARELLE, *alone*.

My master is truly mad to run unsought into danger. But, upon my word his assistance has been of some use; the two have put the three to flight.

SCENE IV.—DON JUAN, DON CARLOS, SGANARELLE, *in the background*.

D. CAR. (*Putting up his sword*). The flight of these robbers shows me what I owe to your arm. Allow me, sir, to return you thanks for so generous an action, and let . . .

D. JU. I have done nothing, sir, but what you would have done in my place. Such adventures touch our honour; the action of these rogues was so cowardly, that it would have been taking part with them not to have opposed them. But how fell you into their hands?

D. CAR. By chance I strayed from my brother and all our retinue; and whilst I was endeavouring to rejoin them, I fell in with these robbers, who immediately killed my horse, and would have done as much for me, had it not been for your valour.

D. JU. Do you intend to go towards the town?

D. CAR. Yes but I do not intend to go into it; my brother and I are obliged to roam about on account of one of those sad affairs which compel noblemen to sacrifice themselves and their families to their untarnished honour; it is ever fatal, even if we do succeed; if we do not lose our life, we are compelled to leave the kingdom. This is the reason why I think it unfortunate to be a nobleman, for however discreetly and honestly he may live himself, he cannot prevent the laws of honour from connecting him with the disgraceful conduct of other people, nor from having his life, repose, and property depend upon the whims of the first audacious fellow who takes it into his head to do him one of those injuries for which a gentleman must lose his life.

D. JU. There is, however, this advantage, that those who take it into their head to offend us out of mere wantonness run the same risks, and spend their time just as uncomfortably. But if I am not indiscreet, may I ask what this sad affair is?

D. CAR. It has gone so far that the secret can no longer be kept. When the insult is once public, our honour does not oblige us to conceal our shame, but openly to blazon forth our vengeance, and even to proclaim that we intend to avenge ourselves. Therefore, sir, I have no scruples in telling you that the offence which we wish to avenge is the seduction of a sister, who was carried off from a convent, and that the author of this offence is Don Juan Tenorio, son of Don Louis Tenorio. We have been in search for him for some days, and we have followed him this morning, upon the information of a servant, who told us that he had gone out on horseback, with four or five others, and that he had taken this route; but all our pains have been useless, and we cannot discover what has become of him.

D. JU. Do you know this Don Juan, sir, of whom you speak.

D. CAR. No, sir, I do not. I never saw him, and I have only heard my brother describe him; but his reputation is none of the best; he is a man whose life . . .

D. JU. Stop, sir, if you please. He is rather a friend of mine, and it would be base in me to allow any one to speak ill of him.

D. CAR. Out of respect for you, sir, I shall say nothing of him. As you have saved my life, certainly the least thing I can do is not to speak before you of one of your acquaintances, when I can say nothing but evil of him. But however much his friend you may be, I venture to hope that you will not approve of this action of his, or think it strange that we should endeavour to avenge ourselves.

D. JU. On the contrary, I will serve you in this, and spare you some fruitless trouble. I am Don Juan's friend, I cannot help being so; but it is not right that he should offend gentlemen with impunity, and I promise you in his name that he shall give you satisfaction.

D. CAR. And what satisfaction can he give for these sorts of injuries?

D. JU. All that your honour can desire; and, without giving you any further trouble to look for Don Juan, I engage that he shall be forthcoming wherever you like, when you please.

D. CAR. This is very pleasant news, sir, to outraged hearts ; but after what I owe you, it would be very painful to me, if you were to be one of the combatants.

D. JU. I am so intimately connected with Don Juan than he cannot fight unless I must fight too ; but I answer for him as for myself, and you have only to say when you wish to meet him, and give you satisfaction.

D. CAR. How cruel is my lot ! Must I owe my life to you, and Don Juan be one of your friends ?

SCENE V.—DON ALONZO, DON CARLOS, DON JUAN,
SGANARELLE.

D. AL. (*Speaking to his retinue, without seeing Don Carlos or Don Juan*). Give some water to my horses, and then lead them after us ; I shall walk a little. (*Seeing them both*). Heavens ! what do I see ? What ! brother, you are in conversation with our mortal enemy ?

D. CAR. Our mortal enemy ?

D. JU. (*Clapping his hand to his sword*). Yes, I am myself, Don Juan ; and your superior number shall not force me to wish to disown my name.

D. AL. (*Drawing his sword*). Ah ! traitor, you must die, and . . . (*Sganarelle runs away and hides himself*).

D. CAR. Stay, brother. I owe my life to him ; and had he not come to my assistance, the robbers whom I encountered would have killed me.

D. AL. And would you allow this consideration to prevent our vengeance ? Whatever service the hand of an enemy may render us, it ought to have no influence upon our heart ; if we are to measure the obligation by the injury, then your gratitude, brother, is in this case ridiculous ; for honour is infinitely more precious than life, and therefore we owe nothing when we owe our life to him who has taken away our honour.

D. CAR. I know the difference, brother, that a gentleman ought always to make between the one and the other ; and gratitude for the obligation does not efface within me resentment for the injury ; but allow me to give back to him on this very spot what he has lent me ; let me repay him immediately the life I owe him, by delaying our ven-

geance, and by allowing him the liberty of enjoying, for a few days, the benefit of this kind action to me.

D. AL. No, no, we run the risk of not wreaking our vengeance if we delay it, and the opportunity of taking it may never come again. Heaven offers it to us now, and we ought not to let it pass. When honour is mortally wounded, we should not think of keeping any moderation; if you do not like to engage personally in this action, you need only retire, and leave to my arm the glory of such a sacrifice.

D. CAR. Pray, brother . . .

D. AL. All further conversation is unnecessary; he must die.

D. CAR. Hold, I say, brother. I will not allow any attempt upon his life; and I swear by Heaven that I shall defend him here against any and every one; that very life which he has saved shall always guard him; if you attempt to kill him, you must first pierce me.

D. AL. What! you side with our enemy against me; and, instead of feeling the same rage on beholding him as I do, you show feelings full of gentleness!

D. CAR. Brother, let us show moderation in a lawful action; and not avenge our honour with so much violence. Let us master our courage; let us show valour without ferocity, which only proceeds from mature deliberation and reason, not from the impulse of a blind rage. I will not remain in debt, brother, to my enemy; I am under an obligation to him, which I must repay before I do anything else. Our revenge will not be the less exemplary for being deferred; on the contrary, it will be the greater; and the opportunity we have had of taking it, will make it appear more just in the eyes of the whole world.

D. AL. O, the strange weakness and dreadful blindness of thus hazarding the interests of our honour for the ridiculous idea of a fanciful obligation!

D. CAR. No, brother, do not trouble yourself about that. If I commit a fault, I shall make amends for it, and take care of our honour; I know to what it obliges us, and this delay of one day, which my gratitude asks for him, will only augment my desire to satisfy it. You see, Don Juan, how anxious I am to return you the favour I have

received ; by this you can judge of the consequences ; rest assured that I discharge with the same warmth what I owe, and that I shall not be the less punctual in repaying you the insult than the kindness. I will not oblige you to express your sentiments now ; I allow you to think at your leisure about what you are resolved to do. You very well know the great injury you have done us ; you shall yourself judge what reparation it demands. There are peaceful means of giving us satisfaction ; there are violent and bloody ones ; but finally, whatever choice you may make, you have passed me your word to let Don Juan give me satisfaction. Pray, mind to do so, and remember that, out of this place, my only duty is for my honour.

D. JU. I have asked nothing of you, and shall keep my promise.

D. CAR. Come, brother, a moment's forbearance does not injure the severity of our duty.

SCENE VI.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE.

D. JU. Hullo ! hey ! Sganarelle !

SGAN. (*Coming out of a place where he had hid himself*). What is your pleasure, sir ?

D. JU. How ! scoundrel, you run away when I am attacked ?

SGAN. I beg your pardon, sir ; I was quite near. I believe that this gown is purgative, and that to wear it is as good as taking medicine.

D. JU. Plague on your insolence ! Hide your cowardice at least behind a more decent covering. Do you know who the gentleman is whose life I saved ?

SGAN. I ? No.

D. JU. It is a brother of Elvira.

SGAN. A . . .

D. JU. He is gentlemanly enough, and behaved pretty well ; I am sorry I have a quarrel with him.

SGAN. It would be easy for you to arrange all things.

D. JU. Yes, but my passion for Elvira is worn out, and it does not suit my mood to engage myself. You know I love liberty in love, and I cannot resolve to immure my heart between four walls. I have told you a score of times I have a natural propensity to give way to whatever at-

tracts me. My heart belongs to the whole fair sex ; and they must take it by turns, and keep it as long as they can. But what splendid edifice do I see amongst those trees ?

SGAN. Do you not know it ?

D. JU. No, indeed.

SGAN. Why ! it is the tomb which the Commander ordered to be built when you killed him.

D. JU. Ha ! you are right. I did not know that it was hereabout. Every one says it is wonderfully well done, and the statue of the Commander as well ; I have a mind to go and see it.

SGAN. Do not go there, sir.

D. JU. Why not ?

SGAN. It is not courteous to go to pay a visit to a man whom you have killed.

D. JU. On the contrary ; I intend to be courteous by paying him a visit, which he ought to receive politely, if he is anything of a gentleman. Come, let us go in. (*The tomb opens, and discovers a splendid mausoleum and the statue of the Commander*).

SGAN. Ah ! how beautiful that is ! what fine statues ! what beautiful marble ! what fine pillars ! ah ! how beautiful that is ! What do you say of it, sir ?

D. JU. That the pride of a dead man cannot possibly go farther. What I think admirable is that a man, who, whilst he was alive, was satisfied with quite a plain abode, should desire so magnificent a one, when he has no longer occasion for it.

SGAN. Here is the statue of the Commander.

D. J. Zounds ! he looks very well in the dress of a Roman emperor !

SGAN. Upon my word, sir, it is very well made. It seems as if he were alive, and going to speak. He looks at us in such a manner that it would frighten me if I were quite alone ; I do not think he likes to see us.

D. JU. He would be wrong ; and it would be an unhandsome reception of the honour I do him. Ask him if he will come to take supper with me.

SGAN. That is a thing he has no occasion for, I believe.

D. JU. Ask him, I say.

SGAN. You are jesting. It would be madness to go and speak to a statue.

D. JU. Do what I bid you.

SGAN. How ridiculous! Mr. Commander . . . (*Aside*). I laugh at my folly, but my master makes me do it. (*Aloud*). Mr. Commander, my master, Don Juan, asks whether you will do him the honour to come to take supper with him. (*The statue nods its head*). Ah!

D. JU. What is the matter? What ails you? Tell me. Will you speak?

SGAN. (*Nodding his head like the statue*). The statue . . .

D. JU. Well, what do you mean, villain?

SGAN. I say that the statue . . .

D. JU. Well! what of the statue? Speak, or I will break every bone in your body.

SGAN. The statue made a sign to me.

D. JU. Plague take the rascal!

SGAN. I tell you it made a sign to me; there is nothing more true. Go and speak to him yourself, and then you will see. Perhaps . . .

D. JU. Come rogue, come. I will convict you clearly of cowardice. Observe. Will his Excellency the Commander come to take supper with me? (*The statue nods his head again.*)

SGAN. I would not take ten pistoles to see it again. Well, sir?

D. JU. Come, let us begone.

SGAN. (*Alone*). These are your free-thinkers who believe in nothing.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—(*A Room in Don Juan's Palace*). DON JUAN, SGANARELLE, RAGOTIN.

D. JU. (*To Sganarelle*). Be it as it will; let us drop it. It is but a trifle, and we may have been deceived by a false light, or surprised by some giddiness which disturbed our sight.

SGAN. Ah! sir, do not try to deny what we saw with our own eyes. Nothing can be more certain than that nod; I make no doubt that Heaven offended by your way of living has wrought this miracle to convince you, and to reclaim you from . . .

D. JU. Harkee. If you bother me any more with your foolish morality; if you say another word on that subject, I shall call one of the servants, send for a strong switch, have you held down by three or four men, and give you a thousand lashes. Do you understand me? ²⁰

SGAN. Very well, sir, perfectly well. You explain yourself clearly; that is one good thing in you that you never affect a roundabout way; you express yourself with wonderful plainness.²¹

D. JU. Come, let me have supper as soon as possible. A chair here, boy.

SCENE II.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE, LA VIOLETTE, RAGOTIN.

LA V. Sir, here is one of your tradesmen, M. Dimanche, who wishes to speak to you.

SGAN. That is all right; we only wanted to be bothered by a creditor! What put it into his head to come to ask us for money? why did you not tell him that your master was not at home?

LA V. I have been telling him so these three-quarters of an hour, but he would not believe me, and sat down within to wait.

SGAN. Let him wait as long as he likes.

D. JU. No, on the contrary bid him come in. It is very bad policy to hide from your creditors. It is good to pay them something; and I possess the secret of sending them away satisfied without giving them a farthing.

SCENE III.—DON JUAN, M. DIMANCHE, SGANARELLE, LA VIOLETTE, RAGOTIN.

D. JU. Ha! M. Dimanche, come this way. How de-

²⁰ This is the first time that Don Juan threatens Sganarelle in a positive and serious way,—a proof that he is disturbed by what he has seen. Hence the slightest contradiction kindles his fury.

²¹ This is an imitation of the *Andria* of Terence, Act i., Scene 2.

lighted I am to see you ! And how angry I am that my people did not show you in immediately ! I had given orders that I would not see any one ; but this order was not meant for you, and you have a right never to have the door shut against you in my house.

M. DIM. Sir, I am very much obliged to you.

D. JU. (*To La Violette and Ragotin*). Zounds ! rascals, I shall teach you to leave M. Dimanche in the ante-chamber, and I shall let you know who is who.

M. DIM. Sir, it is not of the slightest consequence.

D. JU. (*To M. Dimanche*). What ! to say I was not within, to M. Dimanché, my very best friend !

M. DIM. Sir, I am your servant ; I came . . .

D. JU. Here, quick, a seat for M. Dimanche.

M. DIM. Sir, I am very well as I am.

D. JU. No, no ; I will have you sit down by me.

M. DIM. It is not necessary.

D. JU. Take away that stool, and bring an arm chair.

M. DIM. Sir, you are jesting, and . . .

D. JU. No, no ; I know what I owe you ; and I will not allow them to make any difference between us two.

M. DIM. Sir. . . .

D. JU. Come, sit down.

M. DIM. There is no need for it, sir. I have only one word to say to you. I was . . .

D. JU. Sit you down there, I say.

M. DIM. No, sir, I am very well. I come to . . .

D. JU. No, I will not hear you if you do not sit down.

M. DIM. Sir, I do as you wish.—I . . .

D. JU. Upon my word, M. Dimanche, you look very well.

M. DIM. Yes, sir, at your service. I came to . . .

D. JU. You have an admirable constitution, rosy lips, a ruddy complexion, and sparkling eyes.

M. DIM. I should be glad . . .

D. JU. How is Mrs. Dimanche, your good lady ?

M. DIM. Very well, sir, thank Heaven.

D. JU. She is a good woman

M. DIM. She is your humble servant, sir. I came . . .

D. JU. And how is your little daughter, Claudine ?

M. DIM. As well as possible.

D. JU. What a pretty little girl she is! I love her with all my heart.

M. DIM. You do her too much honour, sir. I . . .

D. JU. And does little Colin make as much noise as ever with his drum?

M. DIM. Always the same, sir. I . . .

D. JU. And your little dog, Brusquet, does he still bark as loudly, and as lustily bite the legs of the people who visit you?

M. DIM. More than ever, sir; and we cannot break him off it.

D. JU. Do not be surprised if I ask after your whole family; for I take a very great interest in them all.

M. DIM. We are infinitely obliged to you, sir. I . . .

D. JU. (*Holding out his hand*). Shake hands, then, M. Dimanche. Are you really a friend of mine?

M. DIM. Sir, I am your servant.

D. JU. I' gad, I am yours with all my heart.

M. DIM. You do me too much honour. I . . .

D. JU. There is nothing I would not do for you.

M. DIM. Sir, you are too kind.

D. JU. And that without any motive, believe me.

M. DIM. I have certainly not deserved this favour. But, sir . . .

D. JU. Nonsense! Come, Mr. Dimanche, will you take supper with me without any ceremony?

M. DIM. No, sir; I must return home immediately. I . . .

D. JU. (*Rising*). Here, quick, a candle to light Mr. Dimanche, and let four or five of my fellows take their blunderbusses to escort him.

M. DIM. (*Rising also*). Sir, this is not necessary; I can very well go alone. But . . . (*Sganarelle quickly removes the chairs*).

D. JU. What? They shall escort you; I take too great an interest in you. I am your humble servant, and your debtor to boot.

M. DIM. Ah! sir . . .

D. JU. I do not conceal it, and I tell it to everyone.

M. DIM. If . . .

D. JU. Do you wish me to see you home?

M. DIM. Oh, sir! you jest. Sir . . .

D. JU. Embrace me then, pray. Once more I desire you to be convinced that I am entirely yours, and that there is nothing in the world which I would not do to serve you.

SCENE IV.—M. DIMANCHE, SGANARELLE.

SGAN. I must needs own that my master is a man who loves you much.

M. DIM. It is true ; he is so polite to me, and pays me so many compliments, that I can never ask him for money.

SGAN. I assure you that his whole household would lay down their lives for you ; and I wish something would happen to you, that somebody would take it into his head to cudgel you, then you should see how . . .

M. DIM. I believe it ; but, Sganarelle, pray speak a word to him about my money.

SGAN. Oh ! do not you trouble yourself about that, he will pay you as well as anyone.

M. DIM. But you, Sganarelle, you owe me something on your own account.

SGAN. Fie ! do not speak of that.

M. DIM. What ? I . . .

SGAN. Do I not know what I owe you ?

M. DIM. Yes. But . . .

SGAN. Come, Mr. Dimanche, I am going to light you to the door.

M. DIM. But my money . . .

SGAN. (*Taking M. Dimanche by the arm*). You are only jesting.

M. DIM. I wish to . . .

SGAN. (*Pulling him*). Come.

M. DIM. I intend to . . .

SGAN. (*Pushing him towards the door*). Fiddlesticks !

M. DIM. But . . .

SGAN. (*Pushing him again*). Fie !

M. DIM. I . . .

SGAN. (*Pushing him quite off the stage*). Fie I say.²²

²² Sganarelle has not much more money to give than his master ; but as he has not the same means of awing or of flattering M. Dimanche, he uses but few words, and trusts to the strength of his arm to silence his creditor, and to turn him out of the house. The servant, as well as the master, are true to their natures.

SCENE V.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE, LA VIOLETTE.

LA V. (*To Don Juan*). Sir, here is your father.

D. JU. Oh! This completes the business! It wanted
ly this to drive me mad!

SCENE VI.—DON LOUIS, DON JUAN, SGANARELLE.

D. LOUIS. I see plainly that I disturb you, and that you could very easily have dispensed with my visit. It is true we are a thorn in one another's path, and if you are tired of seeing me, I am also very tired of your unruly behaviour. Alas! how little do we know what we do, when we do not allow Heaven to judge what we need, when we wish to be wiser than it, and importune it by our blind wishes and inconsiderate demands! I most anxiously wished for a son; I incessantly prayed with incredible fervour for one; and this son, whom I obtained by wearying Heaven with my prayers is the plague and punishment of that very life, of which I thought he would be the joy and consolation! With what eye, do you think, can I behold the many unworthy actions, whose wickedness can hardly be palliated before the world, that continuance of disgraceful affairs which daily compels us to weary the goodness of our sovereign, and which has exhausted, in his opinion, the merit of my services, and the influence of my friends? Ah! what a mean spirit you have! Do you blush because you so little deserve your lofty birth? Tell me, pray, what right have you to be proud of it? and what have you done in this world that gives you a claim to be considered a nobleman? Do you think it is sufficient to bear the title and arms of one, and that it is any glory to be descended of noble blood, if one lives in infamy? No, no! Rank is nothing without virtue.²³ We have therefore no share in the glory of our ancestors, unless we strive to be like them; and the lustre which their actions reflect upon us, demands that we should do them like honour, follow in their footsteps, and not degenerate from their virtues, if we would be deemed their true descendants. Hence in vain are you born of lofty progeni-

²³ Burns also says "The rank is but the guinea stamp,
The man's the gowd for a' that."

tors; they disown you as one of their race, and all the illustrious deeds that they have achieved confer no advantage upon you; on the contrary, their renown only redounds to your discredit; and their glory is a shining light which renders clear to the eyes of all the infamy of your actions. Know, finally, that a nobleman who leads a wicked life is a monster in nature; that virtue is the prime badge of nobility; that I regard much less the name which a man bears than the actions which he commits, and that I should value more highly a porter's son who was an honest man, than a monarch's son who led such a life as yours.²⁴

D. JU. Sir, if you were to take a seat, you would speak more at your ease.

D. LOUIS. No, insolent wretch; I will neither take a seat nor speak any more, and I plainly perceive that all my words have no effect upon you; but learn, unworthy son, that by your actions you have worn out a father's love; that, sooner than you think, I shall put a stop to your irregularities, forestall the vengeance of Heaven, and, by your punishment, blot out the shame of being your father.

SCENE VII.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE.

D. JU. (*Still addressing his father, although he has left*). Why! die as soon as you can, it is the best thing you can possibly do. Every one must have his turn; it drives me mad to see fathers live as long as their children. (*He throws himself down in his arm-chair*).

SGAN. Ah! sir, you are in the wrong.

D. JU. (*Rising*). I in the wrong.

SGAN. (*Trembling*). Sir . . .

D. JU. I in the wrong?²⁵

SGAN. Yes, sir, you were wrong in having listened to what he said to you, and you ought to have turned him out by the shoulders. Did any one ever see anything

²⁴ Nearly the whole of Don Louis' speech, beginning from, "Oh! what a mean spirit you have," is, in the original, in blank verse.

²⁵ Don Juan twice says to Sganarelle, "I in the wrong?" The reproaches of his servant would not sting him so much if he did not feel he deserved them.

more impertinent? A father to come and remonstrate with his son, and tell him to reform his ways, not to forget his lofty birth, to live the life of a respectable man, and a hundred other silly things of the same kind! Can a man like you, who knows how to live, stand such a thing as that? I wonder at your patience. Had I been in your place, I should have sent him about his business. (*Aside*). O cursed complaisance, what do you bring me to!

D. JU. Will supper be ready soon?

SCENE VIII.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE, RAGOTIN.

RAG. Sir, a lady, with her face veiled, wishes to speak to you.

D. JU. Who can that be?

SGAN. You must see.

SCENE IX.—DONNA ELVIRA, *veiled*, DON JUAN, SGANARELLE.

D. ELV. Do not be surprised, Don Juan, to see me at this hour, and in this dress. An urgent motive obliges me to make you this visit; what I have to say will admit of no delay. I do not come here possessed by that wrath I showed a little while ago; I am changed from what I was this morning. I am no longer that Donna Elvira who uttered imprecations against you, whose angry soul vented nothing but threats, and breathed only revenge. Heaven has banished from my heart all that unworthy passion which I entertain for you, all those tumultuous upheavings of a criminal attachment, all those shameful outbursts of an earthly and gross love; and it has left in my heart a flame which burns for you without any sensual affection, a tenderness entirely holy, a love detached from everything, which is not actuated by selfishness, and cares only for your good.

D. JU. (*Whispering to Sganarelle*). I think you weep?

SGAN. Excuse me.

D. ELV. It is this perfect and pure love which brings me hither for your sake, to impart to you a warning from Heaven, and endeavour to turn you away from that precipice whither you are hastening. Yes, Don Juan, I know

all the irregularities of your life; and that same Heaven which has touched my heart, and made me see the errors of my own conduct, has inspired me to come to you, and to tell you in its name that your crimes have tired out its mercy, that its dreadful wrath is ready to fall upon you, that you can avoid this by a speedy repentance, and that perhaps not another day is left to save yourself from the greatest of all miseries. As for me, no earthly ties bind me any longer to you. Thanks be to Heaven, I have abandoned all foolish thoughts. I am resolved to retire into a nunnery; I only hope to live long enough to expiate the crime I have committed, and, by an austere penance, to deserve pardon for the blindness into which I have been plunged by the violence of a guilty passion. But, when I am retired from the world, it would greatly pain me if a person, whom I once tenderly loved, should be made an ominous example of the justice of Heaven; it will be an unspeakable delight to me if I can prevail upon you to ward off the dreadful blow that threatens you. I beseech you, Don Juan, grant me as a last favour this soothing consolation; refuse me not your own salvation, which I beg of you with tears; if you are not moved for your own sake, let at least my entreaties prevail, and spare me the terrible grief of seeing you condemned to eternal punishments.

SGAN. (*Aside*). Poor lady!

D. ELV. I once loved you very tenderly; nothing in this world was so dear to me as you; I forgot my duty for your sake; I have done every thing for you; all the reward I desire is that you should amend your life, and ward off your destruction. Save yourself, I beseech you, either for your own sake or mine. Once more, Don Juan, I beg it of you with tears; and if the tears of a person you once loved have no influence with you, I conjure you by everything that is most capable of moving you.

SGAN. (*Aside, looking to Don Juan*). You have the feelings of a tiger.

D. ELV. I leave you now; that is all I had to say to you.

D. JU. Madam, it is late, stay here. We shall give you as good a room as we can.

D. ELV. No, Don Juan, do not detain me longer.

D. JU. Madam, you will oblige me by remaining, I assure you.

D. ELV. No, I tell you, let us not waste time in needless words. Let me go immediately; do not insist upon accompanying me, and think only of profiting by my advice.

SCENE X.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE.

D. J. Do you know that I felt something stirring in my heart for her, that I was rather pleased with this strange unexpected adventure, and that her careless dress, her languishing air, and her tears, rekindled within me some small embers of an extinguished flame?

SGAN. That is as much as to say her words did not make any impression on you.

D. JU. Supper, quickly.

SGAN. Very well.

SCENE XI.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE, LA VIOLETTE,
RAGOTIN.

D. JU. (*Sitting down at table*). Sganarelle, we must really think of amending our lives.

SGAN. Ay, that we must!

D. JU. Yes, upon my word, we must reform. Twenty or thirty years more of this life, and then we shall consider about it.

SGAN. Oh!

D. JU. What do you say to that?

SGAN. Nothing. Here comes supper. (*He takes a bit from one of the dishes that was brought in, and puts it into his mouth*).

D. JU. Methinks you have a swollen cheek: what is the matter with it? Speak. What have you in your mouth?

SGAN. Nothing.

D. JU. Show it me. Zounds! he has got a swelling in his cheek. Quick! a lancet to open it. The poor fellow cannot stand this any longer, and this abscess may choke him. Wait! see it is quite ripe. Ha! you rascal!

SGAN. Upon my word, Sir, I wished to see whether your cook had not put in too much pepper or salt.

D. JU. Come, sit down there and eat. I have some

business for you as soon as I have finished supper. I perceive you are hungry.

SGAN. (*Sitting down at the table*). I should think so, Sir, I have not eaten anything since this morning. Taste that, it is very good. (*Ragotin takes Sganarelle's plate away, as soon as he has got anything upon it to eat*). My plate, my plate! Gently, if you please. Ods boddikins! my mannikin, how nimble you are in giving clean plates! I say, little la Violette, you are not very handy in giving a man something to drink! (*Whilst la Violette gives Sganarelle something to drink Ragotin again takes away his plate*).

D. JU. Who can it be that knocks in such a manner?

SGAN. Who the deuce comes to disturb us at our meal?

D. JU. I wish to take my supper at least in peace; let no one, therefore, come in.

SGAN. Let me alone, I shall go to the door myself.

D. JU. (*Seeing Sganarelle return frightened*). What ails you? What is the matter?

SGAN. (*Nodding his head as the statue did*). The . . . is there.

D. JU. Let us go and see, and let us show that nothing can move me.

SGAN. Ah! poor Sganarelle, where will you hide yourself?

SCENE XII.—DON JUAN, THE STATUE OF THE COMMANDER, SGANARELLE, LA VIOLETTE, RAGOTIN.

D. JU. (*To his servants*). A chair and a plate here. Quick! (*Don Juan and the Statue sit down at the table*). (*To Sganarelle*). Come, sit down.

SGAN. Sir, I have lost my appetite.

D. JU. Sit down here, I say. Give me something to drink. The Commander's health, Sganarelle. Give him some wine.

SGAN. Sir, I am not thirsty.

D. JU. Drink, and sing a song to entertain the Commander.

SGAN. I have got a cold, Sir.

D. JU. No matter. Begin. (*To his servants*). You, there, come and sing along with him.

STAT. It is enough, Don Juan. I invite you to come and take supper with me to-morrow. Will you be so bold?

D. JU. Yes. Sganarelle alone shall accompany me.

SGAN. I thank you, to-morrow is fast-day with me.

D. JU. (*To Sganarelle*). Take a light.

STAT. No need of light for those whom Heaven guides.

ACT V.

(*The theatre represents a landscape*).

SCENE I.—DON LOUIS, DON JUAN, SGANARELLE.

D. LOU. What! my son, is it possible that the mercy of Heaven has granted my prayers? Is what you tell me really true? Do you not deceive me with a false expectation? and can I indeed believe the astonishing tidings of your conversion?

D. JU. (*Playing the hypocrite*).²⁶ Yes, I have seen the error of my ways; I am no longer the same I was last night; and Heaven has suddenly wrought a change in me, which will surprise every one. It has touched my heart and opened my eyes; I look back with horror upon my long blindness, and the crimes and disorders of the life I have led. In my own mind I consider all my former abominations; I am astonished that Heaven could bear with me so long, and that it has not twenty times discharged upon my head the thunderbolts of its terrible justice. I see how kind and merciful it has been to me in not punishing my crimes; I intend to profit by it as I ought, to show openly to the world a sudden change in my life, to repair, by those means, the scandal of my past actions, and endeavour to obtain from Heaven a full re-

²⁶ Don Juan until now was swayed only by his passions, and a slave to pleasure and debauchery. When he finds himself everywhere detested, when he sees the anger of powerful families raised against him, when his friends leave him isolated, and his creditors become importunate, when even his own father has cursed and disinherited him, and when he imagines that the shadow of a man he has killed pursues him, the only way that is left open to him, is falsehood and hypocrisy. He does not change his character, it is true, but his conversation and behaviour.

mission of my sins. I am now going to strive for this; I beg of you, Sir, to aid me in this design, and to assist me in making choice of a person, who may serve me as a guide, and under whose conduct I may walk safely in the way upon which I am entering.

D. LO. Ah! my son! how easily does the love of a father return, and how quickly do the offences of a son fade from the memory at the least mention of repentance! I have already forgotten all the sorrows you have caused me; everything is effaced by the words you have just spoken. I confess I am beside myself; I shed tears of joy; all my prayers are answered, and henceforth I have nothing to ask from Heaven. Embrace me, my son, and persist, I conjure you, in this praiseworthy resolution. As for me, I shall go immediately to carry these happy tidings to your mother, unite with her in expressing our delight, and return thanks to Heaven for the holy thoughts with which it has vouchsafed to inspire you.

SCENE II.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE.

SGAN. Ah, Sir, how glad I am to see you converted! I have long been waiting for this; and now, thanks to Heaven, all my wishes are accomplished.

D. JU. Hang the booby!

SGAN. How, booby?

D. JU. What, do you think I was serious in what I said just now, and do you imagine that my mouth uttered what my heart believed?

SGAN. What! it is not . . . You do not . . . Your . . . (*Aside*). Oh! what a man! what a man! what a man!

D. JU. No, no, I am not altered, and my feelings are always the same.

SGAN. What, do you not yield to the surprising miracle of a moving and speaking statue?

D. JU. There is really something in that which I do not understand; but, whatever it may be, it is not capable either of convincing my judgment, or of shaking my nerves, and if I said I wished to reform my conduct, and was going to lead an exemplary life, it is a plan which I have formed out of pure policy, a useful stratagem, a necessary disguise

which I am willing to adopt, in order to spare the feelings of a father, whose assistance I want, and to screen myself, with respect to mankind, from the consequences of a hundred disagreeable adventures. Sganarelle, I make you my confidant in this case, and I am very glad to have a witness of the feeling of my inmost soul, and of the real motives which instigate me to act as I do.²⁷

SGAN. What! you believe in nothing, and you pretend at the same time to set up as a virtuous man!

D. JU. And why not? There are many others besides myself, who carry on this trade, and who make use of the same mask to deceive the world.

SGAN. (*Aside*). Oh! what a man! what a man!

D. JU. There is no longer any shame in acting thus: hypocrisy is a fashionable vice, and all fashionable vices pass for virtues. The character of a virtuous man is the best part which one can play. Now-a-days, the profession of hypocrite possesses marvellous advantages. It is an art, the quackery of which is always respected; and although it be seen through, no one dares to say anything against it. All other vices of mankind are liable to censure, and everyone is at liberty to attack them openly; but hypocrisy is a privileged vice, which, with its own hand, closes the mouth of all the world, and peacefully enjoys a sovereign impunity. By mere force of humbug, a compact body is formed by the whole set. He who offends one, brings them all upon him; and those, whom every one knows to act in all good faith, and to be perfectly sincere,—even those, I say, are generally the dupes of the others; they simply fall into the traps of the humbugs, and blindly support those who ape their own conduct. How many, think you, do I know who, by this stratagem, have adroitly patched up the errors of their youth; who put on a cloak of religion, and beneath this venerated habit obtain leave

²⁷ The maxims which Don Juan promulgates farther on in defence of hypocrisy, are not so much for Sganarelle as for the audience who listen to the piece; hence the statement that he is "very glad to have a witness . . . of the (his) real motives," which he then unfolds. Don Juan is above all afraid that, for one single moment, he could be thought sincerely repentant, and is glad to have some confidant who can testify to his hypocrisy. I doubt, however, if the real hypocrite ever unbosoms himself, even to his most intimate companion. Tartuffe has no confidant.

to be the most wicked fellows on earth? It signifies nothing that their intrigues, and they themselves, are known for what they are, they have none the less influence in society; a demurely bent head, a canting sigh, and a pair of up-turned eyes, justify with the world all that they can do. It is under this favourable shelter that I intend to take refuge, and arrange matters comfortably. I shall not abandon my darling habits, but I shall take care to conceal them, and amuse myself quietly. If I should be discovered, I shall, without stirring a finger, find my interests espoused by the whole crew,²⁸ and be defended by them through thick and thin against every one. In short, this is the true way of doing with impunity all that I please. I shall set myself up as a censor of the actions of others, judge ill of every one, and think well only of myself. Whoever has offended me, however slightly, I shall never forgive; but preserve, without much ado, an irreconcilable hatred. I shall announce myself as the advocate of the interests of Heaven; and, under this convenient pretext, I shall persecute my enemies, accuse them of impiety, let loose against them those rash zealots who, without knowing why or wherefore, will raise an outcry against them, overwhelm them with abuse, and openly condemn them to perdition on their own private authority. It is thus that we must profit by men's weaknesses, and that a man who is no fool adapts himself to the vices of his age.²⁹

SGAN. O Heavens! what do I hear? You only wanted to be a hypocrite to make you perfect; and now you have reached the height of your abominations. Sir, your last stroke is more than I can bear, and I cannot help speaking. Do what you please with me; beat me, break every bone in my body, kill me if you like; I must discharge my conscience, and, like a faithful servant, tell you what I ought. Know, sir, that the pitcher goes so often to the

²⁸ The original has a "*cabale*," which was formerly said only of the clique of *The Précieuses*; but, when Don Juan was performed (1665), it had come to mean "a set of organized devotees."

²⁹ These words contain a vigorous protest against those who had attacked *Tartuffe*,—which had already been played tentatively—and through whose machinations it had been forbidden to be brought out.

well, that it comes home broken at last, and as that author, whose name I have forgotten, very well says, man is, in this world, like a bird on a bough; the bough is fixed to the tree; he who clings to the tree follows good precepts; good precepts are better than fair words; fair words are found at court; at court are courtiers; the courtiers follow the fashion; fashion proceeds from fancy; fancy is a faculty of the soul; the soul gives us life; life ends in death; death causes us to think of Heaven; Heaven is above the earth; the earth is not the sea; the sea is subject to storms; the storms toss vessels; vessels have need of a good pilot; a good pilot is prudent; young people are not prudent; young people ought to obey old people; old people love riches; riches make men rich; the rich are not poor; the poor have necessities; necessity has no law; he who knows no law lives like a brute beast, and consequently you shall be condemned to the bottomless pit.³⁰

D. JU. What fine arguments!

SGAN. If you do not give in, after this, so much the worse for you.

SCENE III.—DON CARLOS, DON JUAN, SGANARELLE.

D. CAR. Don Juan, I meet you just in time; and I am glad to address you here rather than at your own house, to ask you what you are resolved to do. You know that it concerns me, and that, in your presence, I took upon me to watch over this affair. As for me, I do not conceal it, I sincerely wish that things may be arranged in an amicable way; there is nothing which I would not do to induce you to take that course, and to see you publicly recognize my sister as your wife.

D. JU. (*In a hypocritical tone*). Alas! I should indeed like to give you, with all my heart, the satisfaction you desire; but Heaven is directly opposed to it; it has inspired me with the design of amending my life; and I

³⁰ Some of the early editions have Sganarelle's speech only as far as "in death." At last, Sganarelle's indignation is roused by Don Juan's hypocrisy; he flies in a passion, and attacks his master violently, but flounders in the midst of his reasonings, talks nonsense, and ends rather abruptly.

now entertain no other thoughts than entirely to abandon all that binds me to this world, to strip myself as soon as possible of all sorts of pomps and vanities, and henceforth to correct, by an austere behaviour, all those criminal irregularities into which a blind and youthful ardour led me.

D. CAR. This design, Don Juan, does not clash with what I propose, and the company of a lawful wife is not in opposition to the praiseworthy designs with which Heaven has inspired you.

D. JU. Alas! that is by no means the case. Your sister herself has formed this same plan; she has resolved to withdraw into a nunnery; and we have been both touched by grace at the same time.

D. CAR. Her going into a nunnery cannot give us satisfaction, since it may be attributed to the contempt which you show to her and our family; our honour demands that she should be married to you.

D. JU. I assure you that that cannot be. I was very much inclined towards that union; and this very day I asked counsel from Heaven about it; but, when I did so I heard a voice which told me that I ought not to think of your sister, and that most certainly I could not be saved with her.

D. CAR. Do you think, Don Juan, that you can blind us with such fine excuses?

D. JU. I obey the voice of Heaven.

D. CAR. What? would you have me be satisfied with such a speech?

D. JU. Heaven will have it so.

D. CAR. Have you taken my sister out of a nunnery, to abandon her at last?

D. JU. Heaven ordains it so.

D. CAR. Shall we suffer such a blot upon our family?

D. JU. Seek your redress from Heaven.

D. CAR. Pooh! why always Heaven?

D. JU. Heaven wishes it should be so.

D. CAR. It is enough, Don Juan; I understand you. This spot is not favourable for what I have to say about it; but I shall find you before long.

D. JU. You may do as you please. You know I am not

wanting in courage, and can use my sword, if need be. I am going directly through that little lonely street which leads to the great convent; but I declare to you, solemnly, I do not wish to fight; Heaven forbid the thought; and if you attack me, we shall see what will come of it.³¹

D. CAR. Truly, we shall see, we shall see.

SCENE IV.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE.

SGAN. Sir, what a devil of a style have you adopted? This is worse than all the rest, and I liked you much better as you were before. I always hoped you might be saved; but now I despair of it; I believe that Heaven, which has endured you hitherto, can never bear this last abomination.

D. JU. Pooh! Pooh! Heaven is not so particular as you think; and if men were every time to . . .

SCENE V.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE, A GHOST *in the form of a veiled woman*.

SGAN. (*Seeing the Ghost*). Ah! Sir, Heaven speaks to you; it is a warning—it gives you.

D. JU. If Heaven gives me a warning, it must speak more plainly, if it wishes me to understand it.

GHOST. Don Juan has but a moment to take advantage of the mercy of Heaven; and if he does not repent now, his perdition is certain.

SGAN. Do you hear, sir?

D. JU. Who dares to utter such words? I think I know that voice.

SGAN. Oh, sir, it is a Ghost, I know it by its step.

D. JU. Ghost, phantom, or devil, I shall see what it is. (*The Ghost changes its shape, and represents time with a scythe in its hand*).

SGAN. Oh Heavens! do you see this change of shape, sir?

D. JU. No, no, nothing can frighten me; and I shall try with my sword whether it is a body or a spirit. (*The Ghost vanishes the instant Don Juan offers to strike it*).

³¹ In the former scene, Don Juan has laid down the theory of hypocrisy; in this scene, he brings it into practice.

SGAN. Ah, sir, yield to so many proofs, and repent immediately.

D. JU. No, no, come what will, it shall never be said that I was capable of repentance. Come, follow me.

SCENE VI.—THE STATUE OF THE COMMANDER, DON JUAN, SGANARELLE.

STAT. Stay, Don Juan. You gave me your word yesterday that you would come and sup with me.

D. J. Yes. Where shall we go?

STAT. Give me your hand.

D. JU. Here it is.

STAT. Don Juan, a terrible death is the consequence of persistency in sin; and when the mercy of Heaven is refused, its thunder appears.

D. JU. Oh Heavens! what do I feel? an inward flame devours me, I can bear it no longer, and my whole body is on fire. Oh! (*Loud claps of thunder are heard; great flashes of lightning fall upon Don Juan. The earth opens and swallows him up; flames burst out on the very spot where he went down*).

SCENE VII.—SGANARELLE, *alone*.

Alas! my wages! my wages! Every one is satisfied by his death. Offended Heaven, violated laws, maids seduced, families dishonoured, parents outraged, wives ruined, husbands driven to despair, all are satisfied. I alone am unhappy. My wages, my wages, my wages!³²

³² This exclamation of Sganarelle about his wages gave great offence. People considered that a man who could remain cool and collected in the presence of such a miracle, was nothing better than an infidel, and that instead of shouting for his wages, he would have done better to remain dumb, as struck by a religious terror. Molière had to leave out the exclamation, "my wages." But, a few years later, it was allowed to pass without any remarks when put into the mouth of Arlequin in a stupid farce by a certain actor, Rosimond.

L'AMOUR MEDECIN.

COMÉDIE.

LOVE IS THE BEST DOCTOR

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS.

(*THE ORIGINAL IN PROSE.*)

SEPTEMBER 15TH, 1665.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

ON the 15th of September, 1665, was represented at Versailles an impromptu comedy, "interspersed with tunes, symphonies, singing, and dancing," called *Love is the best Doctor*, in which Molière most strenuously attacked the faculty of medicine. He had already begun this criticism in *Don Juan*; but, as it was put into the mouth of a complete sceptic in everything, it was not considered as very serious. In *Love is the best Doctor*, however, he ridiculed the most fashionable physicians, and the patients who consulted and trusted them. Four doctors are called in to a consultation, in which, instead of comparing notes about the state of the patient, they converse about things in general and nothing in particular; at the end, the distracted father finds himself more bewildered than before, and rushes out of the house to buy a quack medicine, which the quack declares "cures by its excellence rare more complaints than are counted up in a whole year," and the great virtues of which could ne'er be "repaid by the gold of all climes which by the ocean are bound," but for which the anxious but avaricious parent only pays "thirty sous," "which," he says, addressing the quack, "you will take, if you please." The professional discussions of the learned brethren, and the shrewd interested advice of Dr. Filerin, who rebukes them, and tells them not to quarrel before the public, and thus to lessen their influence, but to maintain a sedate and deeply anxious look, are admirable, and suitable, not for one but for all ages. As long as credulous and physic-swallowing people exist, and as long as external appearances will be taken as an indication of true knowledge and worth, so long will Molière's comedy retain its sting. In nice contrast to the contentious practitioners, is the sharp common-sense of the maid Lisette, and the stubbornness and miserly feelings of the father Sganarelle, who asks advice, but does not follow it, refuses to give his daughter in marriage because "he means to keep his wealth," and is finally tricked out of his daughter and a dowry as well.

Although I do not deny the courage, I cannot admire the taste, of Molière, in bringing four famous court physicians bodily on the stage, in exposing the physical defects of two of them,—the one a stammerer, the other a very rapid talker,—and in even barely disguising their names under Greek denominations, and which, tradition affirms, are due to Boileau. It is always right to attack and ridicule a vice on the stage, when by so doing, an author conscientiously believes that he is improving his fellow-men at the same time that he is amusing them, and is holding "a mirror up to nature;" but it can never be defensible to imitate living per-

sons, to mimic their defects, to ape their attitudes—nay, to wear their very dress. The representative of a vice or virtue should, I imagine, be an embodiment of many persons, possessed of such good or evil qualities, but not the faithful portrait of one man or woman. To say that such an imitation is Aristophanesk, is simply to disguise a very ugly, and not even a very artistical, thing, under a not over-nicely sounding adjective.

According to some annotators, Molière meant by Desfonandrès, compounded of two Greek words, *phonos*, murder, and *andrès*, men, a certain Dr. Elie Béda, who, at the time when *Love is the best Doctor* was first represented, must have been about seventy years old. He had adopted the name of Des Fougerais, and was the favourite physician of the high nobility and magistracy. Born a Protestant, he became a Roman Catholic in 1648, is said to have been a regular medical Vicar of Bray, and never to have changed his religious or medical opinions, except to benefit himself and his family. M. A. Jal, in his *Dictionnaire critique*, pretends that Guénault is caricatured in Desfonandrès, because he killed so many patients by antimony, and because Desfonandrès boasts, in the third scene of the second act, that he has “an astonishing horse, an indefatigable animal.” Now, it was well known in Molière's time, that Guénault was the only doctor who always rode on horseback, whilst his colleagues went about in carriages, sedan chairs, or on foot.

Bahis (barker), seems to have been intended for Dr. Esprit, whose real name was André, and who spoke very fast. He had been one of the physicians of Cardinal Richelieu, afterwards of Cardinal Mazarin, and finally of Monsieur, brother of the King, and was a declared partizan of emetics. According to Raynaud, *les Médecines au temps de Molière*, 1683, the physician Brayer is meant by Bahis, chiefly because Bahis is in French “brailleur, shouter,” and therefore there is a similarity in name, and also because he was one of the four physicians who held a famous consultation at Vincennes, when Cardinal Mazarin was dying.

By Macroton (stammerer), it is generally believed that Dr. François Guénault is meant, because he spoke very slowly. This gentleman was one of the best known and most celebrated medical men of the time, and had been physician to the Prince de Condé, and then to the Queen. He had often professionally attended on the King, and scarcely a man of rank fell ill who did not consult him. It is said that he was very fond of money, and a declared champion of antimony, and, through his influence amongst the great, a decided lord amongst doctors.

Tomès (the bleeder), was intended for Vallot, first physician to the King with the rank of grand Chamberlain, as well as with the hereditary title of Count; and who exercised supreme jurisdiction over all the doctors and apothecaries in the kingdom. He kept a *Journal de la Santé du Roy* (Louis XIV.), published in 1662, which contains all the recipes “with which Heaven inspired” him, to keep the monarch in health. Bleeding and purgatives appear to have been the doctor's two favourite remedies. He was a strenuous defender of emetics, Peruvian bark and laudanum, and obtained a great triumph when he cured, in 1650, Louis XIV., with antimonial wine; but became anew the butt of many satires and epigrams, on the death of Henrietta of France, Queen of England, whom his opponents accused him of having killed by his prescriptions.

In the character of Dr. Filerin (a friend of death), it is said that Molière wished to have a hit at the whole medical faculty. Mons. E. Soulié, in the *Recherches sur Molière*, states that in Molière's time, there lived a certain well-known fencing-master, André Fillerin, and that therefore, the

joke must have been enjoyed by the audience, on hearing that name given to a physician who killed his man.

Love is the best Doctor was, according to the preface, "sketched, written off, learned, and acted in five days." It was three times represented at Versailles, and played, for the first time, in Paris, on the 22d of September 1665, when it was acted twenty-six times consecutively.

Several English dramatists have borrowed or imitated Molière's comedy.

The first imitator of Molière's *Love is the best Doctor* is John Lacy, who was greatly admired by Pepys¹ and by Charles II., and was an excellent low-comedy actor. During the civil wars, he served as lieutenant in the King's army, and returned to the stage at the Restoration. It has been rumoured that Lacy was a great favourite of Nell Gwyn, and taught her, amongst other things, the art of acting. He lived to an advanced age, and died on the 17th of September 1681. He wrote several plays, one of which was *The Dumb Lady, or the Farrier made a Physician*, a farce in five acts, performed about 1672, of which the main plot is taken from Molière's *Mock Doctor*, and the catastrophe is borrowed from his *Love is the Best Doctor*. Lacy, who himself most probably played the part of Drench, the farmer, dedicates his play to the high-born and most hopeful Prince Charles, Lord Limerick, and Earl of Southampton, the eldest of the three natural sons of Charles II., by Barbara Villiers, wife of Roger Palmer, Earl of Castlemain, better known as Duchess of Cleveland.² This dedication is couched in such high-flown and fawning language, that I give it here as a specimen of what flattery was in the days of Charles II.:

"GREAT SIR,—When I began to write this dedication my hand shook, a fear possessed me, and I trembled; my pen fell from me, and my whole frame grew disordered, as if blasted with some sudden upstart comet. Such awe and reverence waits on dignity, that I now find it fit for me to wish I had been refused the honour of my dedication, rather than undertake a task so much too great for me. How shall I excuse this bold and saucy fault? How shall my mean, unworthy pen render you your attributes? Now I find presumption is a sin indeed. I have given myself a wound beyond the cure of common men: heal me, then, great sir; for where princes touch the cure is infallible. And now, since you so graciously have received my Farrier, who dares say he is no Physician? When you vouchsafe to call him Doctor, he has commenced, and from your mouth he has taken his degree; for what you say is, and ought to be. Such a power is due to you from the greatness of your blood. I and my abject muse had perished but for you; and in such distress whither should we flee for shelter but to him that has power to spread his wings and cover us? And you have done it generously. Yet am I not to wonder at this virtue in you, since your high birth can do no less for you than to make you good; and you are so. And may that goodness and humility which so early appears in you increase to a full perfection! May your virtues prove as beautiful as your person! May they still endeavour to out-vie each other, yet neither obtain, but still walk hand in hand till your virtues in you be revered by all mankind, and your lovely person honoured by all women; and so may you continue to a long and happy life. But I need not wish this, nor the world doubt it, for already you're possessed of all those virtues that men hereafter may reasonably expect from you; for, being supported by majesty of one side, and so admired and beautiful a mother on the other, besides her great and honourable birth, on such sure foundations you cannot fail our hopes; and that you never may, shall be for ever the prayers of your most faithful and most obedient servant,

JOHN LACY."

¹ See Pepys' Diary, 21st and 22d of May 1662; 10th and 12th of June 1663; 15th of April, 1st of May, and 13th of August 1667; and 28th of April 1668.

² This dignity was conferred upon her, according to *Collins' Peerage*, on account of the high opinion Charles II. entertained of her "personal virtues." For a similar high opinion entertained by Louis XIV., the latter made a duchess of Mademoiselle de la Vallière.—See Introductory Notice to the *Princess of Elis*.

Mrs. Aphra Behn (See Introductory Notice to *Pretentious Young Ladies*, Vol. I., has, in *Sir Patient Fancy*—an imitation, partly of Molière's *Malade Imaginaire*, and of *M. de Pourceaugnac*, and acted at the Duke's Theatre, 1678—borrowed and amplified all the scenes of *Love is the best Doctor*, in which the physicians consult. But the patient to be cured is a hypochondriac, and not a young girl; Sir Patience himself is present at the consultation, and the doctors' names are also altered to Turboon, Amsterdam, Leyden, Brunswick, and Sir Credulous.

As a second imitation of *Love is the best Doctor* I have to mention "*The Quacks, or Love's the Physician*," as it was acted (after being twice forbid) at the Theatre-Royal in Drury Lane (March 18th, 1705), by Mr. Swiney. Quod libet, licet. London, Printed for Benj. Bragg, at the Blew Ball in Avemary Lane, 1705." In the Preface, Swiney states that "this Play was to be stifled because the other House were to Act one upon the same Subject," and that "the hints of this Play were taken from a petit piece of Molière call'd L'Amour Médecin," but "I can't stile it a translation, the Doctor's part being intirely new, much of the other characters alter'd, and the Contrivance somewhat Chang'd." He ends by saying that "the Noise of these Scenes Alarm'd the Licenser, who generally destroys with as much Distinction as the old Woman in Don Quixot's Library." Swiney harps on the same string in the Prologue, by saying :

"Let every Quack be comforted to-Night,
Care has been taken that he shall not Bite."

The play is, for the most part, a bad translation of Molière's play, with a few alterations and additions which do not improve it. The scene of Sganarelle and his advisers is left out; while a nurse and two servant-men, Harry and Edward, are needlessly introduced. The doctors' names are changed into Medley, Caudle, Tickle, Pulse, Novice, Refugee, and the conversation is slightly altered. In the end, Clitandre and Lucinda, who have been really married by a priest disguised as a footman, acknowledge their deceit, and are forgiven.

James Miller (See Introductory Notice to *The Pretentious Young Ladies*, Vol. I., wrote a comedy, *Art and Nature*, acted at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, 1738; and according to Baker's *Biographia Dramatica*, the principal scenes in this play are founded on the *Arlequin Sauvage* of M. De l'Isle and *Le Flatteur* of Rousseau. But it met with no success, because the Templars had taken an unreasonable prejudice against Miller, on account of his farce of *The Coffee House*, in which they thought themselves attacked, and seem to have been determined to condemn any piece known to be his. Miller has imitated the first, second, fifth, and sixth scenes of the first act of *Love is the best Doctor*. In his Preface to the Right Honourable the Lady. . . . Miller states, "that he never knew a Play destroy'd with so much Art. . . . But in Paris there is an Academy founded for the Encouragement of Wit and Learning, so in London, it is said, there is a Society established for the Demolition of them." He also says in the Prologue, that he hopes there is none in the theatre, "who'd aim, Thro' Wantonness of Heart, to blast his Fame."

Another translation of Molière's play, under the title of *Love is the Doctor*, was performed as a comedy in one act, at Lincoln's Inn Fields, on April 4, 1734, for the benefit of the author, but has never been printed.

Bickerstaffe (See Introductory Notice to *The School for Wives*, Vol. I., in *Dr. Last in his Chariot*—an imitation of Molière's *Malade Im-*

aginaire, acted at the Haymarket, 1769—acknowledges his obligation to Mr. Foote for a whole scene in the first act, the consultation of the physicians. This acknowledgment is certainly a proof of Bickerstaffe's gratitude, but none of his reading ; otherwise he might have discovered that Foote had simply taken it from Molière's *Love is the best Doctor*, and considerably enlarged it ; the doctors are called Coffin, Skeleton, Bul-ruddery, and of course Doctor Last.

TO THE READER.

THIS is only a slight impromptu, a simple pencil sketch, which it has pleased the King to have made into an entertainment. It is the most hastily composed of all those written by order of his Majesty ; and when I say that it was sketched, written, learned, and acted in five days, I shall only be speaking the truth. There is no need to tell you that many things depend entirely on the manner of the performance. Every one knows well enough that comedies are written only to be acted ; and I advise no one to read this, unless he have the faculty, while doing so, of catching the meaning of the business of the stage. I shall say only one thing more, that it is to be wished that these sorts of works could always be shown with the same accessories, with which they are accompanied when played before the King. One would then see them under much more agreeable conditions ; and the airs and symphonies of the incomparable M. Lulli, added to the sweet voices and agility of the dancers, invest them, undoubtedly, with certain graces, with which they could with difficulty dispense.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

IN THE PROLOGUE.

COMEDY. | MUSIC. | THE BALLET (*Dancing*).

IN THE COMEDY.

SGANARELLE, <i>father to Lucinde</i> . ³	M. FILERIN, <i>physician</i> .
CLITANDRE, <i>in love with Lucinde</i> .	A NOTARY.
M. GUILLAUME, <i>dealer in hangings</i> .	CHAMPAGNE, <i>Sganarelle's servant</i> .
M. JOSSE, <i>goldsmith</i> .	LUCINDE, <i>daughter of Sganarelle</i> .
M. TOMÈS, <i>a physician</i> .	AMINTA, <i>Sganarelle's neighbour</i> .
M. DESFONANDRÈS, “	LUCRETIA, <i>Sganarelle's niece</i> .
M. MACROTON, “	LISETTE, <i>maid to Lucinde</i> .
M. BAHIS, “	

IN THE BALLET.

First Entry.

CHAMPAGNE, *Sganarelle's servant, dancing*.
FOUR PHYSICIANS,
dancing.

Second Entry.

A QUACK, *singing*.
TRIVELINS and SCARAMOUCHES,⁴ *dancing in the suite of the quack*.

Third Entry.

COMEDY. | MUSIC. | THE BALLET.
SPORTS, LAUGHTER, and PLEASURES, *dancing*.

Scene.—PARIS, IN ONE OF THE ROOMS OF SGANARELLE'S HOUSE.

³ It is more than probable that Molière played this part. In the inventory taken after his death, and given by M. E. Soulié, we find, “a box of clothes for the representation of the *Médecins*,—for this was the name often given to *Love is the best Doctor* by Molière's contemporaries,—consisting in a doublet of common satin, cut out on golden *roc* (*sic*), cloak and breeches of velvet, with a gold ground, adorned with a loop and buttons.”

⁴ Tiberio Fiorilli, an Italian actor, was born near Naples, in 1608, and died at Paris, on the 8th of December, 1694. He was much liked by Louis XIV., and acted the character of Scaramouch, a braggart, a poltroon, and a fool, always dressed in black, with a large white collar. In Italian, a skirmish is called *scaramuccia*; hence perhaps the name. Isaac Disraeli in his excellent chapter “The Pantomimical Characters” in the *Curiosities of Literature*, says: “When Charles V. entered Italy, a Spanish captain was introduced; a dreadful man he was too, if we are to be frightened by names: *Sangre e Fuego!* and *Matamoro!* His business was to deal in Spanish rhodomontades, to kick out the native Italian *Capitan*, in compliment to the Spaniards. and then to take a quiet caning from Harlequin, in compliment to themselves. When the Spaniards lost their influence in Italy, the Spanish Captain was turned into Scaramouch, who still wore the Spanish dress, and was perpetually in a panic. The Italians could only avenge themselves on the Spaniards in pantomime.”

LOVE IS THE BEST DOCTOR.

(L'AMOUR MÉDECIN.)

PROLOGUE.

COMEDY, MUSIC, THE BALLET.

Comedy. Let us our fruitless quarrels banish,
Each other's talents not by turns dispute:
But greater glory to attain
This day of all let be our aim.
Let us all three unite with matchless zeal
The greatest King on earth with pleasure to
provide.

The three together. Let us all three unite with matchless
zeal
The greatest King on earth with
pleasure to provide.

Comedy. From toils more irksome than can be imagined,
Amongst us, now and then, he comes to un-
bend,
Can greater glory, greater pleasure be our
share?

The three together. Let us all three unite with matchless
zeal
The greatest King on earth with
pleasure to provide.⁵

⁵ The Prologue is in the original in verse.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—SGANARELLE, AMINTA, LUCRETIA, M. GUILLAUME, M. JOSSE.

SGAN. What a strange thing is life ! and well may I say with a great ancient philosopher, that he who has much land has also strife,⁶ and misfortune seldom comes alone. I had but one wife, and she is dead.

M. GU. And, pray, how many would you have ?

SGAN. She is dead, friend Guillaume. I take this loss very much to heart, and I cannot think of it without tears. I was not altogether satisfied with her behaviour, and we often quarrelled ; but, after all, death settles everything. She is dead ; I bewail her. If she were alive, we would very likely quarrel. Of all the children God sent me, He has left me but one daughter, and it is she who is the cause of all my trouble ; for I see her plunged in the most dismal melancholy, the greatest sadness, of which there is no way of getting rid, and the cause of which I cannot even learn. I declare I am at my wit's end, and am very much in want of good advice about it. (*To Lucretia*). You are my niece ; (*To Aminta*), you my neighbour ; (*To M. Guillaume and M. Josse*), you my companions and friends : tell me, I pray, what I am to do.

M. JO. As for me, I think that finery and dress are the things which please young girls most ; and if I were you, I should buy her, this very day, a handsome set of diamonds, or rubies, or emeralds.

M. GU. And I, if I were in your place, I would buy her a beautiful set of hangings, with a landscape, or some figures in them, and I should have them hung up in her room to cheer her spirits and to please her eyes.

AMIN. As for me, I would not take so much trouble ; I would marry her well, and as quickly as I could, to that young man who asked her hand some time ago, as I have been told.

LUC. And I, I think your daughter is not at all fit to

⁶ It was not an ancient philosopher who said this. It is simply a wise saw of the Middle Ages, common to the French and the Italians, *qui terre a guerre a* and *chi compra terra compra terra compra guerra*.

be married. She has too delicate and unhealthy a constitution, and it is almost sending her wilfully and speedily to the next world, to expose her to bear children in the state she is in. The busy world does not suit her at all, and I would advise you to put her in a convent, where she will find some amusements more to her taste.

SGAN. All this advice is certainly admirable, but I think it rather interested, and I find that you are giving it very much for your own benefit. You are a goldsmith, M. Josse; and your advice savours of a man who wants to get rid of his wares. You sell hangings, M. Guillaume, and you look to me as if you had some which you would fain part with. The young man whom you are in love with, fair neighbour, is, I have been told, the very one who is somewhat favourably disposed towards my daughter; and you would not be sorry to see her the wife of another. And as for you, my dear niece, it is not my intention, as is well known, to allow my daughter to get married at all, for reasons best known to myself; but your advice to make a nun of her is that of a woman who might charitably wish to become my sole heiress. Therefore, ladies and gentlemen, although your counsels be the best in the world, with your permission, I shall not follow a single one of them. (*Alone*). So much for those fashionable advisers.

SCENE II.—LUCINDE, SGANARELLE.

SGAN. Ah, here is my daughter come to take a breath of air. She does not see me. She is sighing; she looks up to the sky. (*To Lucinde*). May Heaven protect you! Good morning, my darling. Well, what is the matter? How do you feel? What! always so sad and so melancholy, and you will not tell me what ails you? Come, open your little heart to me. There, my poor pet, come and tell your little thoughts to your little fond papa. Keep your spirits up. Let me give you a kiss. Come. (*Aside*). It makes me wild to see her in that humour. (*To Lucinde*). But tell me, do you wish to kill me with displeasure; and am I not to know the reason of this great listlessness? Tell me the cause, and I promise that I shall do everything for you. Yes, if you will only tell me

why you are so sad, I assure you and swear on this very spot, that I shall leave nothing undone to please you; I cannot say more. Are you jealous because one of your companions is better dressed than yourself, and is it some new-fashioned stuff of which you want a dress? No. Is your room not furnished nicely enough, and do you wish for one of those cabinets from St. Laurent's Fair?⁷ It is not that. Do you feel inclined to take lessons in something, and shall I get you a master to teach you how to play upon the harpsichord? No, not that either. Are you in love with some one, and do you wish to be married? (*Lucinde gives an affirmative sign*).

SCENE III.—SGANARELLE, LUCINDE, LISETTE.

LIS. Well, sir, you have just been talking to your daughter. Have you found out the cause of her melancholy?

SGAN. No. She is a hussy who enrages me.

LIS. Let me manage it, sir; I shall pump her a little.

SGAN. There is no occasion; and since she prefers to be in this mood, I am inclined to let her remain in it.

LIS. Let me manage it, I tell you. Perhaps she will open her heart more freely to me than to you. How now! Madam,⁸ you will not tell us what ails you, and you wish to grieve everyone around you? You ought not to behave as you do, and if you have any objection to explain yourself to a father, you ought to have none to open your heart to me. Tell me, do you wish anything from him? He has told us more than once that he will spare nothing to satisfy you. Does he not allow you all the

⁷ In *Le Tracas de Paris*, the Hubbub of Paris, described in burlesque verses by F. Colletet, written in 1665, and re-edited by the Bibliophile Jacob in 1859, I find a long and not very poetical description of this fair, which seems to have been frequented, if not by bad, at least by very mixed company. Formerly this fair lasted only eight days, then three weeks and finally three months; it was probably held in Molière's time where the church St. Laurent is now, Boulevard de Strassbourg.

⁸ Lisette addresses Lucinde as "Madam" in the presence of her father. This seems to me to be ironical, as Madam was used only in speaking to ladies of high nobility. When later, in *Clitandre*, the lover calls her by that same name, it appears to me to be done as a piece of flattery.

freedom you could wish for? And do pleasure parties and feasts not tempt you? Say! has anyone displeased you? Say! have you not some secret liking for some one to whom you would wish your father to marry you? Ah! I begin to understand you; that is it? Why the deuce so many compliments? Sir, the secret is found out, and . . .

SGAN. (*Interrupting her*). Go, ungrateful girl; I do not wish to speak to you any more, and I leave you in your obstinacy.

LUC. Dear father, since you wish me to tell you . . .

SGAN. Yes, I am losing all my regard for you.

LIS. Her sadness, sir . . .

SGAN. She is a hussy who wishes to drive me to my grave.

LUC. But, father, I am willing . . .

SGAN. That is not a fit reward for having brought you up as I have done.

LIS. But, sir . . .

SGAN. No, I am in a terrible rage with her.

LUC. But, father . . .

SGAN. I do not love you any longer.

LIS. But . . .

SGAN. She is a slut.

LUC. But . . .

SGAN. An ungrateful girl.

LIS. But . . .

SGAN. A hussy who will not tell me what is the matter with her.

LIS. It is a husband she wants.

SGAN. (*Pretending not to hear*). I have done with her.

LIS. A husband.

SGAN. I hate her.

LIS. A husband.

SGAN. And disown her as my daughter.

LIS. A husband.

SGAN. Do not speak to me any more about her.

LIS. A husband.

SGAN. Speak no more to me about her.

LIS. A husband.

SGAN. Speak no more to me about her.

LIS. A husband, a husband, a husband.

SCENE IV.—LUCINDE, LISETTE.

LIS. True enough, none so deaf as those who will not hear.

LUC. Well, Lisette, I was wrong to hide my grief! I had but to speak to get all I wished from my father! You see now.

LIS. Upon my word, he is a disagreeable man; and I confess that it would give me the greatest pleasure to play him some trick. But how is it, Madam, that, till now, you have kept your grief from me?

LUC. Alas! what would have been the use of telling you before? and would it not have been quite as well if I had kept it to myself all my life? Do you think that I have not foreseen all which you see now, that I did not thoroughly know the sentiments of my father, and that when he refused my hand to my lover's friend, who came to ask for it in his name, he had not crushed every hope in my heart?

LIS. What! this stranger, who asked for your hand, is the one whom you . . .

LUC. Perhaps it is not altogether modest in a girl to explain herself so freely; but, in short, I tell you candidly, that, were I allowed to wish for any one, it is he whom I should choose. We have never had any conversation together, and his lips have never avowed the love he has for me; but, in every spot where he had a chance of seeing me, his looks and his actions have always spoken so tenderly, and his asking me in marriage seems to me so very honourable, that my heart has not been able to remain insensible to his passion; and yet, you see to what the harshness of my father is likely to bring all this tenderness.

LIS. Let me manage it. Whatever reason I have to blame you for the secret you kept from me, I shall not fail to serve your love; and, provided you have sufficient resolution . . .

LUC. But what am I to do against a father's authority? And if he will not relent . . .

LIS. Come, come, you must not allow yourself to be led like a goose, and provided it be done honourably, we can

free ourselves from a father's tyranny. What does he wish you to do? Are you not of an age to be married, and does he think you are made of marble? Once more bear up, I shall take in hand your love affair, and from this very moment do all I can to favour it, and you shall see that I know some stratagems . . . But I see your father. Let us go in, and leave me to act.

SCENE V.—SGANARELLE, *alone*.

It is good sometimes to pretend not to hear things, which one hears only too well; and I have done wisely to ward off the declaration of a wish which I have no intention of satisfying. Was there ever a greater piece of tyranny than this custom to which they wish to subject all fathers; anything more preposterous and ridiculous than to amass great wealth by hard work, and to bring up a girl with the utmost tenderness and care, in order to strip one's self of the one and of the other, for the benefit of a man who is nothing to us? No, no, I laugh at that custom, and I mean to keep my wealth and my daughter to myself.

SCENE VI.—SGANARELLE, LISETTE.

LIS. (*Running on to the stage and pretending not to see Sganarelle*). Oh! what a misfortune! Oh! what a calamity! Poor Mr. Sganarelle! where can I find him?

SGAN. (*Aside*). What does she say?

LIS. (*Still running about*). Oh! wretched father! what will you do when you hear this news?

SGAN. (*Aside*). What can it be?

LIS. My poor mistress!

SGAN. I am undone!

LIS. Ah!

SGAN. (*Running after Lisette*). Lisette!

LIS. What a misfortune!

SGAN. Lisette!

LIS. What an accident!

SGAN. Lisette!

LIS. What a calamity!

SGAN. Lisette!

LIS. Oh, Sir!

SGAN. What is the matter?

LIS. Sir!

SGAN. What has happened?

LIS. Your daughter . . . ⁹

SGAN. Oh! Oh!

LIS. Do not cry in such a way, sir. You will make me laugh.

SGAN. Tell me quickly.

LIS. Your daughter, overcome by your words, and seeing how dreadfully angry you were with her, went quietly up to her room, and, driven by despair, opened the window that looks out upon the river.

SGAN. Well!

LIS. Then, casting her looks up to Heaven: No, said she, it is impossible for me to live under my father's anger, and as he disowns me for his child, I shall die.

SGAN. She has thrown herself out of the window?

LIS. No, sir. She gently closed it, and lay down upon her bed. There she began to cry bitterly; all at once she turned pale, her eyes rolled about, her strength failed her, and she became stiff in my arms.

SGAN. Oh, my child! She is dead?

LIS. No, sir. I pinched her till she came to herself again; but she relapses every moment, and I believe she will not live out the day.

SGAN. Champagne! Champagne! Champagne!

SCENE VII.—SGANARELLE, CHAMPAGNE, LISETTE.

SGAN. Quick, go and fetch me some doctors, and bring a lot of them.¹⁰ One cannot have too many in a crisis like this. Oh my daughter! my poor child!

FIRST ENTRY.¹¹

Champagne, servant to Sganarelle, knocks, dancing, at the doors of four Physicians.

⁹ Molière has also employed the beginning of this scene in *The Rogueries of Scapin*. (See Vol. III.)

¹⁰ Compare Shakespeare's Second Part of *King Henry IV*. (Act ii., Scene 1), when Fang, being kept off by Falstaff and Bardolph, shouts "A rescue! a rescue!" and Hostess quickly exclaims, "Good people, bring a rescue or two!"

¹¹ The original has *entre-actre*, which might perhaps have been translated by "interlude."

The four Physicians dance, and ceremoniously enter into Sganarelle's house.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—SGANARELLE, LISETTE.

LIS. What do you want with four physicians, sir? Is one not enough to kill one person?

SGAN. Hold your tongue. Four heads are better than one.

LIS. Cannot your daughter die well enough without the assistance of those gentlemen?

SGAN. Do you think people die through having physicians?

LIS. Undoubtedly; and I knew a man who maintained—and proved it, too, by excellent reasons—that we should never say, Such a one has died of a fever, or from inflammation of the lungs, but, Such a one has died of four physicians and two apothecaries.

SGAN. Hush! do not offend those gentlemen.

LIS. Upon my word, sir, our cat had a narrow escape from a leap he took, a little while ago, from the top of the house into the street; he was three days without eating, and unable to wag head or foot; but it is very lucky that there are no cat doctors, else it would have been all over with him, for they would have physicked and bled him.

SGAN. Will you hold your tongue when I bid you? What next! Here they are.

LIS. Look out; you are going to be finely edified. They will tell you in Latin that your daughter is ill.

SCENE II.—MM. TOMÈS, DESFONANDRÈS, MACROTON, BAHIS, SGANARELLE, LISETTE.

SGAN. Well, gentlemen?

M. To. We have examined the patient sufficiently, and undoubtedly there is a great deal of impurity in her.

SGAN. Is my daughter impure?

M. To. I mean to say that there is a great deal of impurity in her system, and much corrupt matter.

SGAN. Ah! I understand you now.

M. To. But . . . We are going to consult together.

SGAN. Come, hand some chairs.

LIS. (*To M. Tomès*). Ah! sir, are you with them?

SGAN. (*To Lisette*). How do you know this gentleman?

LIS. From having seen him the other day at a dear friend's of your niece.

M. To. How is her coachman?

LIS. Very well indeed. He is dead.

M. To. Dead?

LIS. Yes.

M. To. That cannot be.

LIS. I do not know whether it can be or not; but I know well enough that it is.

M. To. He cannot be dead, I tell you.

LIS. And I tell you that he is dead and buried.

M. To. You are mistaken.

LIS. I have seen him.

M. To. It is impossible. Hippocrates says that these sorts of diseases end only on the fourteenth or twenty-first day; and he has been ill only six.

LIS. Hippocrates may say what he likes; but the coachman is dead.

SGAN. Peace! chatterbox. Come, let us leave this room. Gentlemen, I pray you to consult carefully. Although it is not the custom to pay beforehand, yet, for fear I should forget it, and to have done with it, here is . . . (*He hands them some money, and each one, on receiving it, makes a different gesture.*)

SCENE III.—MM. DESFONANDRÈS, TOMÈS, MACROTON, BAHIS. (*They all sit down and begin to cough*).

M. DES. Paris is marvellously large, and one has to take long journeys when business is a little brisk,

M. To. I am glad to say that I have got a wonderful mule for that; and that one would hardly believe what a deal of ground he takes me over daily.

M. DES. I have got an astonishing horse, and it is an indefatigable animal.

M. To. Do you know the ground my mule has been

over to-day? I have been, first, close by the Arsenal; from the Arsenal, to the end of the faubourg Saint Germain; from the faubourg Saint Germain, to the lower part of the Marais; from the lower part of the Marais, to the Porte Saint-Honoré; from the Porte Saint-Honoré, to the faubourg Saint-Jacques; from the faubourg Saint-Jacques, to the Porte de Richelieu; from the Porte de Richelieu, here; and from here, I have yet to go to the Place Royale.¹²

M. DES. My horse has done all that to-day; and, besides, I have been to see a patient at Ruel.¹³

M. To. But, by the bye, which side do you take in the quarrel between the two physicians Theophrastus and Artemius? for it is a matter that divides our profession.

M. DES. I? I am for Artemius.

M. To. So am I. It is true that his advice killed the patient, as we have experienced, and that Theophrastus's was certainly much better; but the latter is wrong in the circumstances, and ought not to have been of a different opinion from his senior. What do you say?

M. DES. Certainly. We ought at all times to preserve the professional etiquette, whatever may happen.

M. To. For my part, I am excessively strict on that subject, except among friends. The other day three of us were called in to consult with an outsider;¹⁴ but I stopped the whole affair, and would hold no consultation unless things were conducted according to etiquette. The people of the house did what they could and the case grew worse; but I would not give way, and the patient bravely died during the contention.

M. DES. It is highly proper to teach people how to behave, and to show them their inexperience.¹⁵

M. To. A dead man is but a dead man, and of very little consequence; but professional etiquette neglected does great harm to the whole body of physicians.

¹² M. Tomès states, in detail, that he has been from one end of Paris to the other.

¹³ Ruel, a village on the road to Saint Germain, was at that time (1665) a very fashionable residence; the Cardinal de Richelieu had a country seat there, under Louis XIII.

¹⁴ A physician, who had not taken his degree in Paris, was called "an outsider," *un médecin de dehors*.

¹⁵ The original has *leur montrer leur bec jaune*.

SCENE IV.—SGANARELLE, MM. TOMÈS, DESFONANDRÈS,
MACROTON, BAHIS.

SGAN. Gentlemen, my daughter is growing worse ; I beg you to tell me quickly what you have decided on.

M. To. (*To M Desfonandrès*). The word is with you, Sir.

M. DES. No, Sir ; it is for you to speak if you please.

M. To. You are jesting.

M. DES. I shall not speak first.

M. To. Sir.

M. DES. Sir.

SGAN. For mercy's sake, gentlemen, drop these ceremonies, and consider that matters are urgent.

(*They all four speak at the same time.*)

M. To. Your daughter's complaint . . .

M. DES. The opinion of all these gentlemen . . .

MAC. M. After hav-ing care-fully consi-dered . . .

M. BA. In order to deduce . . .

SGAN. Ah! gentlemen, one at a time, pray . . .

M. To. Sir, we have duly argued upon your daughter's complaint, and my own opinion is, that it proceeds from the overheating of the blood, consequently I would have her bled as soon as possible.

M. DES. And I say that her illness arises from a putrefaction of humours, caused by too great repletion ; consequently I would have her given an emetic.

M. To. I maintain that an emetic will kill her.

M. DES. And I, that bleeding will be the death of her.

M. To. It is like you to set up for a clever man!

M. DES. Yes, it is like me ; and I can, at any rate, cope with you in all kinds of knowledge.

M. To. Do you recollect the man you killed a few days ago?

M. DES. Do you recollect the lady you sent to the other world three days ago?

M. To. (*To Sganarelle*). I have given you my opinion.

M. DES. (*To Sganarelle*). I have told you what I think.

M. To. If you do not have your daughter bled directly, she is a dead woman.

(*Exit.*)

M. DES. If you have her bled, she will not be alive a quarter of an hour afterwards.

(*Exit.*)

SCENE V.—SGANARELLE, MM. MACROTON, BAHIS.

SGAN. Which of the two am I to believe? And who can decide amidst such conflicting opinions? Gentlemen, I beseech you to guide me, and to tell me, dispassionately, the best means of relieving my daughter.

M. MAC. (*Drawling out his words*). Sir, in these kind-of-ca-ses, one must pro-ceed ve-ry care-fully, and do nothing in-con-si-der-ate-ly, as the say-ing is; the more so, as the mis-takes one may make, ac-cord-ing to our mas-ter Hip-po-cra-tes, have the most fatal con-se-quen-ces.

M. BA. (*Jerking out his words hastily*). That is true enough, one must take great care what one does; for this is not child's play; and, when a mistake has been made, it is not easy to rectify it, nor make good what one has spoilt: *experimentum periculosum*. It is, therefore, as well to argue beforehand, to weigh things duly, to consider the constitution of people, to examine the causes of the complaint, and to decide upon the remedies to be adopted.

SGAN. (*Aside*). One moves like a tortoise, while the other gallops like a post-horse.

M. MAC. Yes, sir, to come to the fact, I find that your daugh-ter has a chro-nic dis-ease, to which she will succumb if re-lief be not giv-en to her, the more as the symp-toms give in-di-ca-tions of e-mit-ting fu-li-gi-nous and mor-di-cant ex-ha-la-tions which ir-ri-tate the ce-re-bral mem-branes. And these va-pours, which in Greek we call *At-mos*, are caus-ed by pu-trid, te-na-ci-ous, and con-glu-ti-nous hu-mours, which have ag-glo-mer-at-ed in the ab-do-men.¹⁶

M. BA. And as these humours were engendered there by a long succession of time, they have become hardened, and have assumed those malignant fumes that rise towards the region of the brain.

M. MAC. Con-se-quent-ly, in or-der to with-draw, to de-tach, to loos-en, to ex-pel, to e-va-cu-ate these said hu-

¹⁶ This is the theory of "the humours" then in vogue amongst physicians. According to them, every disease arose from a superabundance of humours, which were either in too great quantity or of too bad a quality; the first was called plethora, and was supposed to be cured by copious bleedings; against the second, cacochymia, a frequent use of purgatives was recommended.

mours, a ve-ry strong pur-ga-tive is ne-ces-sa-ry. But first of all, I think it as well, and it will not cause any in-con-ve-ni-ence, to em-ploy some lit-tle a-no-dyne me-di-ci-nes, that is to say, small e-mol-li-ent and de-ter-sive in-jec-ti-ons, re-fresh-ing ju-leps and sy-rups, which may be mix-ed with her bar-ley wa-ter.

M. BA. After that, we will come to the purgatives, and to the bleeding, which we shall repeat, if necessary.

M. MAC. We do not say that your daugh-ter may not die for all this; but you will at least have the sat-is-fac-tion of hav-ing done some-thing, and the con-so-la-tion of know-ing that she died ac-cord-ing to rule.

M. BA. It is better to die according to rule than to recover in violation of it.

M. MAC. We have sin-ce-re-ly told you our o-pi-ni-ons.

M. BA. And we have spoken to you as to our own brother.

SGAN. (*To M. Macroton, drawing out his words*). I am hum-bly o-bli-ged to you. (*To M. Bahis, sputtering*). And I am very much obliged to you for the trouble you have taken.

SCENE VI.—SGANARELLE, *alone*.

Here I am, a little more in the dark than I was before.¹⁷
Zounds. I have got an idea! I will buy some Orvietan,¹⁸

¹⁷ The result of the consultation of the physicians is the same for Sganarelle as, in the *Phormio* (ii., 4) of Terence, the result of the consultation of the three lawyers Cratinus, Hegio, Crito. Demiphon, after hearing it, cries out, "*Incertior sum multo quam dudum* I am much more uncertain than before."

¹⁸ Towards the year 1639, a quack began to sell, on the Pont-Neuf in Paris, specifics against all maladies, and especially an antidote, the Orvietan, so called because it was prepared by a certain doctor Lupi, at Orvieto, a town in Italy. His real name was Jacques Ovyne, and he had a brother, a clergyman, who, as well as himself, was called *de l'Orvietan*; hence Jal, in his *Dictionnaire critique*, supposes that their father must already have sold this electuary. His probable successor was Christoforo Contugi, who called himself "*Antidotaire du Roi*," and who, according to Guy-Pating, bribed twelve Paris physicians, who had afterwards to ask their pardon from the Faculty of Paris, to give him a certificate. According to a note of M. Pauly, in the edition of Molière, published by M. Lemerre, Paris, Vol. IV., Orvietan was an antidote, of which the secret was communicated, in 1560, by Cardinal Deodati to his apothecary, Martin Guerche. It was then called *antutan*, which means antidote of the time. It was named Orvietan by Hieronimo

and I will make her take it. Orvietan is a kind of remedy that has done a great deal of good to many. Soho!

SCENE VII.—SGANARELLE, A QUACK.

SGAN. Will you, Sir, kindly give me a box of your Orvietan, for which I shall pay you?

QUACK. (*Sings*). The gold of all climes which by the ocean are bound

Can e'er it repay this important secret?

My remedy cures, by its excellence rare,

More complaints than are counted up in a whole year:

The itch, the mange, the scurf, the fever, the plague,

The gout, the small-pox, ruptures, the measles,

Great power possesses my Orvietan.

SGAN. Sir, I am willing to believe that all the gold in the world could not pay for your remedy! but here is a piece of thirty sous, which you will take, if you please.

QUACK. (*Sings*). Admire how good I am. For a few paltry pence,

I dispense freely such marvellous treasure.

With this you may brave, quite devoid of all fear,

All the ills to which mortals are subject down here:

The itch, the mange, the scurf, the fever, the plague,

The gout, the small-pox, ruptures, the measles,

Great power possesses my Orvietan.

SECOND ENTRY.

Several Trivelins¹⁹ and Scaramouches, servants of the quack, come in dancing.

Feranti, a native of Orvieto, whose successor, Giovanni Vitrario, transmitted the recipe for it to his son-in-law, Christoforo Contugi, who sold it at Paris, in virtue of a royal privilege, dated 9th April 1647. In the thirteenth chapter of *Kenilworth*, Sir Walter Scott describes how Wayland successfully endeavoured to collect materials for making the Orvietan, or Venice treacle, as it was sometimes called,—understood to be a sovereign remedy against poison.

¹⁹ Domenico Lucatelli, was an Italian comedian, who died in 1671, and acted at Paris the part of Trivelin, a kind of harlequin.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—MM. FILERIN, TOMÈS, DESFONANDRÈS.

M. FIL. Are you not ashamed, gentlemen, for men of your age to show so little discrimination, and to quarrel like young madcaps? Do you not plainly see the harm which these kinds of disputes do us with the world? and is it not sufficient that the learned perceive the dissensions and differences between our contemporaries and the old masters of our craft, without revealing to the public, by our quarrels and bickerings, the boasting of our art? As for me, I do not at all understand the mischievous policy of some of our brethren; and it must be admitted that all these controversies have somewhat strangely disparaged us, and that, if we are not careful, we shall ruin ourselves. I do not say so for my own interest, for, Heaven be praised, my little affairs are already settled. Whether it blows, rains, or hails, those who are dead are dead, and I have sufficient to be independent of the living; yet all these disputes do physic no good. Since Heaven has done us the favour, that, for so many centuries, people remain infatuated with us, let us not open their eyes by our extravagant cabals, and let us take advantage of their folly as quietly as possible. We are not the only ones, as you know full well, who try to make the best of human foibles. The whole study of the greatest part of mankind tends towards that; and every one endeavours to speculate on man's weakness, in order to derive some benefit from them. Flatterers, for example, seek to profit by men's love for praise, by giving them all the vain incense they crave; it is an art by which, as we may see, large fortunes are made. Alchemists seek to profit by the passion for wealth by promising mountains of gold to those who listen to them; the drawers of horoscopes, by their deceitful prophecies, profit by the vanity and ambition of credulous minds. But the greatest failing in men is their love of life; by our pompous speeches we benefit by it, and know how to take advantage of the veneration for our profession with which the fear of death inspires them. Let us, therefore, maintain ourselves in that esteem in

which their foibles have placed us, and let us agree before our patients, so as to claim for ourselves the credit of the happy issue of the complaint, and to throw on Nature all the blunders of our art. Let us not, I say, foolishly destroy the happy accident of an error, which gives bread to so many people, and which allows us to raise everywhere such beautiful estates with the money of those whom we have sent to the grave.²⁰

M. To. You are right in all that you say; but sometimes one cannot control one's temper.

M. FIL. Come, gentlemen, lay aside all animosity, and make up your quarrel on the spot.

M. DES. I consent. Let him allow me to have my way with the emetic for the patient in question; and I will let him have his with the first patient he shall be concerned with.

M. FIL. Nothing could be better said, and that is reasonable.

M. DES. Very well, that is settled.

M. FIL. Shake hands then. Farewell. Another time, show more tact.

SCENE II.—M. TOMÈS, M. DESFONANDRÈS, LISETTE.

LIS. What! gentlemen, you are here, and you do not think of repairing the wrong done to the medical profession?

M. To. What now? What is the matter?

LIS. Some insolent fellow has had the impudence to encroach upon your trade, and, without your prescription, has killed a man by running a sword clean through his body.

M. To. Look you here, you may laugh at us now; but you shall fall into our hands one of these days.

LIS. If ever I have recourse to you, I give you leave to kill me.

²⁰ A great part of Dr. Filerin's speech sets forth some of Montaigne's ideas, contained in the *Essays*, Book II., chapter xxxvii. Molière repeats some of these same ideas, clothed in dog-Latin, and puts them into the opening speech of the president of the learned assembly of persons connected with the medical profession, in the third Interlude of the *Hypochondriac* (See Vol. III.)

SCENE III.—CLITANDRE, *disguised as a physician*,
LISETTE.

CLIT. Well, Lisette, what do you think of my disguise? Do you believe that I can trick the good man in these clothes? Do I look all right thus.

LIS. It could not be better; and I have been waiting impatiently for you. Heaven has given me the most humane disposition in the world, and I cannot bear to see two lovers sigh for one another, without entertaining a charitable tenderness towards them, and an ardent wish to relieve the ills which they are suffering. I mean, no matter at what cost, to free Lucinde from the tyranny to which she is subjected, and to confide her to your care. I liked you at first sight: I am a good judge of people, and she could not have made a better choice. Love risks extraordinary things, and we have concocted a little scheme, which may perhaps be successful. All our measures are already taken: the man we have to deal with is not one of the sharpest; and if this trick fail, we shall find a thousand other ways to encompass our end. Just wait here a little, I shall come back to fetch you. (*Clitandre retires to the far end of the stage.*)

SCENE IV.—SGANARELLE, LISETTE.

LIS. Hurrah! hurrah! Sir.

SGAN. What is the matter?

LIS. Rejoice.

SGAN. At what?

LIS. Rejoice, I say.

SGAN. Tell me what it is about, and then I shall rejoice, perhaps.

LIS. No. I wish you to rejoice first, I wish you to sing, to dance.

SGAN. On what grounds?

LIS. On my bare word.

SGAN. Be it so. (*He sings and dances*). La, lera, la, la, la, lera, la. What the deuce!

LIS. Your daughter is cured, Sir.

SGAN. My daughter is cured?

LIS. Yes. I have brought you a doctor, but a doctor

of importance, who works wonderful cures, and who laughs at the other physicians.

SGAN. Where is he?

LIS. I shall bring him in.

SGAN. (*Alone*). It remains to be seen if he will do more than the others.

SCENE V.—CLITANDRE *disguised as a physician*, SGANARELLE, LISETTE.

LIS. (*Leading Clitandre*). Here he is.

SGAN. That doctor has not much beard, as yet.

LIS. Knowledge is not measured by the beard, and his skill does not lie in his chin.

SGAN. Sir, they tell me that you have some capital recipes for relieving the bowels.

CLIT. My remedies, sir, are different from those of other physicians. They use emetics, bleeding, drugs, and injections; but I cure by words, sounds, letters, talismans, and rings.

LIS. Did I not tell you so?

SGAN. A great man this!

LIS. Sir, as your daughter is yonder, ready dressed, in her chair, I shall bring her here.

SGAN. Yes, do.

CLIT. (*Feeling Sganarelle's pulse*). Your daughter is very ill, Sir.

SGAN. You can tell that here?

CLIT. Yes, by the sympathy which exists between father and daughter.

SCENE VI.—SGANARELLE, LUCINDE, CLITANDRE, LISETTE.

LIS. (*To Clitandre*). Sir, here is a chair near her. (*To Sganarelle*). Come, let us leave them to themselves.

SGAN. Why so? I wish to remain here.

LIS. Are you jesting? We must leave them. A doctor has a hundred things to ask, which it is not decent for a man to hear.

(*Sganarelle and Lisette retire.*)

CLIT. (*Softly to Lucinde*). Ah! lady, how great is my delight! and how little do I know how to begin my discourse! As long as I spoke to you only with my eyes, it seemed to me that I had a hundred things to say; and

now that I have the opportunity of speaking to you, as I wished, I remain silent, and my great joy prevents my utterance.

LUC. I may say the same ; and I feel, like you, thrills of joy which prevent me from speaking.

CLIT. Ah ! madam, how happy should I be, if it were true that you feel all I do, and that I were allowed to judge of your heart by mine. But, may I at least believe, dear lady, that I owe to you the idea of this happy scheme which enables me to enjoy your presence.

LUC. If you do not altogether owe the thought to me, you are, at any rate, my debtor for having gladly approved of the proposal.

SGAN. (*To Lisette*). It seems to me that he talks very close to her.

LIS. He is studying her physiognomy, and all the features of her face.

CLIT. (*To Lucinde*). Will you be constant, dear lady, in these favours which you are bestowing upon me ?

LUC. But you, will you be firm in the resolutions which you have taken ?

CLIT. Ah ! madam, till death. I desire nothing so much as to be yours ; and I shall prove it to you.

SGAN. (*To Clitandre*). Well ! how does our patient ? She seems a little more cheerful.

CLIT. That is because I have already tried upon her one of the remedies which my art teaches me. As the mind has a great influence on the body, and as it is from the first that diseases most generally arise, my custom is to cure the mind before dealing with the body. I have therefore studied this young lady's looks, her features, and the lines of both her hands ; and by the knowledge which Heaven has bestowed upon me, I have discovered she is ill in mind, and that the whole of her complaint arises only from a disordered imagination, from an inordinate desire of being married. As for myself, I think nothing more extravagant and ridiculous than this hankering after marriage.

SGAN. (*Aside*). A clever fellow this !

CLIT. And I have and always shall have, a frightful dislike to it.

SGAN. (*Aside*). A great doctor this!

CLIT. But as we must humour the imagination of patients, and as I have perceived in her a wandering of the mind, and even that there was great danger in not giving her prompt relief, I have taken her at her foible, and told her that I came here to solicit her hand from you. Suddenly her countenance changed, her complexion cleared, her eyes became animated; and if you will leave her for a few days in this error, you will see that we shall cure her.

SGAN. Indeed, I do not mind.

CLIT. After that, we shall apply other means to cure her of this fancy.

SGAN. Yes, that will do very well. Listen! my girl, this gentleman wishes to marry you, and I have told him that I give my consent.

LUC. Alas! can it be possible?

SGAN. Of course.

LUC. But really, in earnest?

SGAN. Certainly.

LUC. (*To Clitandre*). What! You wish to be my husband?

CLIT. Yes, madam.

LUC. And my father consents to it?

SGAN. Yes, my child.

LUC. Ah how happy I am! if that is true.

CLIT. Doubt it not, madam. My love for you, and my ardent wish to be your husband, do not date from to-day, I came only for this; and, if you wish me to tell you the plain truth, this dress is nothing but a mere disguise; I acted the physician only to get near to you, and the more easily to obtain what I desire.

LUC. These are signs of a very tender love, and I am fully sensible of them.

SGAN. (*Aside*). Oh, poor silly girl! silly girl! silly girl!

LUC. You do consent then, father, to give me this gentleman for a husband?

SGAN. Yes, certainly. Come, give me your hand. Give me yours also, Sir, for a moment.

CLIT. But, Sir . . .

SGAN. (*With suppressed laughter*). No, no, it is . . . to satisfy her mind. Take it. That is over.

CLIT. Accept, as a pledge of my faith, this ring which I give you (*Softly to Sganarelle*). It is a constellated ring, which cures aberrations of the mind.²²

LUC. Let us draw up the contract, so that nothing may be wanting.

CLIT. I have no objections, Madam. (*Softly to Sganarelle*). I will bring the fellow who writes my prescriptions, and will make her believe that he is a notary.

SGAN. Just so.

CLIT. Hulloo! send up the notary I have brought with me.

LUC. What! you brought a notary with you?

CLIT. Yes, Madam.

LUC. I am glad of that.

SGAN. Oh the poor silly girl! the silly girl!

SCENE VII.—THE NOTARY, CLITANDRE, SGANARELLE, LUCINDE, LISETTE.

(*Clitandre speaks softly to the Notary.*)

SGAN. (*To the Notary*). Yes, Sir, you are to draw up a contract for these two people. Write. (*To Lucinde*). We are making the contract. (*To the Notary*). I give her twenty thousand crowns as a portion. Write that down.

LUC. I am very much obliged to you, dear father.

NOT. That is done. You have only to sign it.

SGAN. That is a quickly drawn contract.

CLIT. (*To Sganarelle*). But at least, Sir . . .

²² These rings, sometimes called also "planetary rings" had certain stars or planets engraved upon them, and were supposed to soothe the mind; a reminiscence of the feeling that stars influenced human destiny. The metals from which these rings were made appear also to be thought to have some mysterious power, for the seven metals—gold, silver, mercury, copper, iron, tin, and lead,—were under the influence of the Sun, the Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn. If the rings were composed of several metals, then, of course, different influences were at work; if made of all the metals—the *electron* of Paracelsus—they possessed the highest power. I imagine that the metals used in the manufacture of such rings must also have had some connection with the horoscope of the person for whom it was made.

SGAN. No, no, I tell you. Do we not all know . . .
(To the Notary). Come, hand him the pen to sign. *(To Lucinde).* Come you, sign now, sign, sign. Well, I shall sign presently.

LUC. No, no, I will have the contract in my own hands.

SGAN. Well! there then. *(After having signed).* Are you satisfied?

LUC. Better than you can imagine.

SGAN. That is all right, then, that is all right.

CLIT. I have not only had the precaution to bring a notary; I have also brought singers, musicians, and dancers to celebrate the feast, and for our enjoyment. Let them come in. They are people I always have with me, and whom I daily make use of to calm, by their harmony and dancing, the troubles of the mind.

SCENE VIII.—COMEDY, THE BALLET, MUSIC.²³

Together. Without our aid, all humankind
 Would soon become unhealthy.
 We are indeed the best of all physicians.

COMEDY. Would you dispel by easy means
 Splenetic fumes that man is heir to.
 Avoid Hippocrates, and come to us.

TOGETHER. Without our aid, all humankind
 Would soon become unhealthy.
 We are indeed the best of all physicians.

(While the Sports, Laughter, and Pleasures are dancing together, Clitandre leads Lucinde away).

SCENE IX.—SGANARELLE, LISETTE, MUSIC, THE BALLET,
 SPORTS, LAUGHTER, PLEASURES.

SGAN. A pleasant way of curing people this! But where are my daughter and the doctor?

LIS. They are gone to finish the remaining part of the marriage.

SGAN. What do you mean by the marriage?

²³ Here the words "*third entry*" ought to come, or perhaps above the words "*while the sports,*" etc., but nothing is given in the original copies I have compared.

LIS. The fact is, Sir, you have been cleverly done;²⁴ and the joke you thought to play remains a truth.

SGAN. The devil it does! (*He wishes to rush after Clitandre and Lucinde, the dancers restrain him*). Let me go, let me go, I tell you. (*The dancers still keep hold of him.*) Again! (*They wish to make him dance by force*). Plague take you all!

²⁴ The original has *la bécasse est bridée*, the woodcock is caught, an allusion to the snare in which those birds catch themselves.

LE MISANTHROPE.

COMEDIE.

THE MISANTHROPE.

A COMEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

(*THE ORIGINAL IN VERSE.*)

JUNE 4TH, 1666.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

The Misanthrope, Molière's masterpiece, according to Voltaire, was first acted on the 4th of June, 1666, at the theatre of the Palais Royal, and, in spite of what has generally been believed, was no complete failure; for it was represented twenty-one consecutive times.¹ It is, however, not to be expected that a comedy like *The Misanthrope* should please the general public as much as a farce. But those who admired noble thoughts, select language, accurate delineations of character, and a perfect and entertaining style, placed this comedy from the very beginning where it is now generally put, with the common consent of all students of sound literature, in the foremost rank of the good comedies of Molière.

The subject of a misanthrope has been treated at all times and in all literatures. Antiquity possessed a proverbial misanthrope, which Plutarch mentions in his *Lives of Illustrious Men* (Timon) in the following words:

"Anthony in the meantime forsook the city and the society of his friends, and retired to a small house which he had built himself near Pharos, on a mound he had cast up in the sea. In this place, sequestered from all commerce with mankind, he affected to live like Timon, because there was a resemblance in their fortunes. He had been deserted by his friends, and their ingratitude had put him out of humour with his own species.

"This Timon was a citizen of Athens, and lived about the time of the Peloponnesian war, as appears from the comedies of Aristophanes and Plato in which he is exposed as the hater of mankind. Yet, although he hated mankind in general, he caressed the bold and impudent boy Alcibiades, and being asked the reason of this by Apemantus, who expressed some surprise at it, he answered, it was because he foresaw that he would plague the people of Athens. Apemantus was the only one he admitted to his society, and he was his friend in point of principle. At the feast

¹M. E. Despois, in his very accurate book, *Le Théâtre française sous Louis XIV.*, states that *The Misanthrope* was neither a great success, nor a complete failure. At its first representation, 1447 livres, 10 sous were received, which was a considerable "take" for that time; but from the third representation, the receipts went down to between 600 and 700 livres, and the tenth brought only 212 livres. It is therefore, more than probable that, if this comedy had not been Molière's, and played in his own theatre, it would have been withdrawn. The twenty-first representation took place on a Sunday, when there was generally a good deal of money taken at the door and brought only 268 livres.

of sacrifices for the dead, these two dined by themselves, and when Apemantus observed that the feast was excellent, Timon answered, "It would be so if you were not here." Once, in an assembly of the people, he mounted the rostrum, and the novelty of the thing occasioned a universal silence and expectation; at length he said, "People of Athens, there is a fig-tree in my yard, on which many worthy citizens have hanged themselves, and as I have determined to build upon the spot, I thought it necessary to give this public notice, that such as choose to have recourse to this tree for the aforesaid purpose may repair to it before it is cut down."

"He was buried at Halæ near the sea, and the water surrounded his tomb in such a manner that he was even then inaccessible to mankind.

"The following epitaph is inscribed on his monument:

'At last I've bid the knaves farewell;
Ask not my name—but go—to hell.'

"It is said that he wrote this epitaph himself. That which is commonly repeated is by Callimachus.

'My name is Timon, knaves begone!
Curse me, but come not near my stone!'

"These are some of the many anecdotes we have concerning Timon."

In Lucian's "Dialogues of the Dead," Dialogue XXIV., Timon is represented as finding fault with Jupiter about his half-heartedness, twitting him with his want of energy, that when they despoiled his temples and robbed him on Olympus, he dared not set the dogs after them, nor call the neighbours to his assistance, and compares his own case with that of Jove. Jupiter does not altogether like this, and wishes to know from Mercury who that dirty fellow is, standing at the foot of Hymettus, abusing him—coming to the conclusion that it must be some philosopher railing against him. Upon being informed by his son who he really is, the Thunderer expresses his surprise and sorrow at the change that has taken place in the condition of the once so wealthy man, and inquires the causes of this decline. "To speak simply," answered Mercury, "benevolence has ruined him, also philanthropy and compassion towards all in need; but to speak truly, folly and simplicity in choosing his friends, who were only so many vultures gnawing his liver, treating him with disdain afterwards, when he was no longer useful, and even pretending not to know his name." Jove now begins to remember Timon in his better days, and chides himself for his neglect in having forgotten him; alleging, however, as the cause, the noise which the perjured and the wicked make around him, not leaving him a moment's leisure to look into Attica. He commands Mercury to take Plutus with him, to seek Timon, and remain with him, even should he endeavour to drive them from his house by repeating his former acts of benevolence. He also promises revenge upon those who have been ungrateful to Timon when his thunderbolts shall be repaired, which are out of order just then, he having hurled them at the sophist Anaxagoras, who was persuading his disciples that the gods did not exist at all. Plutus refuses to go to Timon because he insulted him, and divided him amongst flatterers and parasites; and begs Jove to send him to those who will appreciate him, and not squander him in benevolence. Jupiter informs Plutus that Timon shall not do so again, having gained experience by his misfortunes; at the same time telling him that he has often complained of different treatment by being completely imprisoned under bars and keys. Plutus gives him to understand that he

prefers the middle way, and does not like the greed of some, any more than the lavishness of others. He prepares to go in company with Mercury to find Timon. They meet with him close at hand, digging the soil. Plutus thinks that, surrounded as he is by Labour, Wisdom, Strength, and Fortitude, they cannot do much for him, and wishes them to leave him. Poverty, who is closely attending Timon, resents the intrusion of Plutus and Mercury, telling them that he had formed the man perfectly to his work, which they would only undo again, and Timon also reviles them for having come to disturb him, threatening to strike them. The two gods reveal themselves to him, offering him wealth. Timon tells Plutus to go and hang himself, and offers to smash him to pieces. Plutus intends to depart, Mercury persuades Timon to reconsider his decision, but Timon persists, telling them he has no need of their services, that his spade is wealth enough, and that he will be perfectly happy if but left alone, asking them to convey his thanks to Jupiter for his kind attentions, but persistently refusing to have ought to do with Plutus, ascribing all his misfortunes to the blind god, who offers to defend himself from the accusations, Timon permitting him to do so in a few words only. Timon reluctantly consents to become rich again in obedience to Jupiter, upon which all his parasites anew assemble round him.

The above sketches fairly represent the idea which antiquity formed of a misanthrope.

Molière's play of *The Misanthrope*, his only comedy which represents courtiers and courtly people, opens with great spirit, and shows us the hero Alceste attacking his friend Philinte for being too lenient and tolerant to the foibles of mankind, whilst the defence of the latter is plausible, perhaps too much so. Then we have Oronte, the high-born but wretched poet, who, offended by Alceste's blunt, honest opinion, goes away fuming and fretting. The coquettish, evil-speaking Célimène, beloved by Alceste, spurns an honest man's affection, through vanity and thoughtlessness, enlivens the comedy, and is finally rewarded and cruelly mortified by being discarded. Such men as Acaste and Clitandre, represent the butterflies of society, fluttering from one drawing-room to another, but instead of distilling, as from flowers, sweet odours, only carrying venomous poison with glib and smooth small talk. The charming Miss Eliante, whose beauty is enhanced by modest behaviour, finally receives the hand of Philinte.

I think no better delineation has been given of this play than the following one by M. Taine, in his "History of English Literature:"—"A dozen conversations make up the play of *The Misanthrope*. The same situation, five or six times renewed, is the whole of *l'École des Femmes*. These pieces are made out of nothing. They have no need of incidents, they find ample space in the compass of one room and one day, without surprises, without decoration, with an arras and four arm-chairs. This paucity of matter throws out the ideas more clearly and quickly; in fact, their whole aim is to bring those ideas prominently forward; the simplicity of the subject, the progress of the action, the linking together of the scenes,—to this everything tends. At every step clearness increases, the impression is deepened, vice stands out: ridicule is piled up, until, before so many apt and united appeals, laughter forces its way and breaks forth. And this laughter is not a mere outburst of physical amusement; it is the judgment which incites it. The writer is a philosopher, who brings us into contact with a universal truth by a particular example. We understand through him, as through La Bruyère or Nicole, the force of pre-

judice, the obstinacy of conventionality, the blindness of love. The couplets of his dialogue, like the arguments of their treatises, are but the worked-out proof and the logical justification of a preconceived conclusion. We philosophize with him on humanity; we think because he has thought. And he has only thought thus in the character of a Frenchman, for an audience of French men of the world. In him we taste a national pleasure. French refined and systematic intelligence, the most exact in seizing on the subordination of ideas, the most ready in separating ideas from matter, the most fond of clear and tangible ideas, finds in him its nourishment and its echo. None who have sought to show us mankind, has led us by a straighter and easier mode to a more distinct and speaking portrait. I will add, to a more pleasing portrait,—and this is the main talent of comedy: it consists in keeping back what is hateful; and observe that that which is hateful abounds in the world. As soon as you will paint the world truly, philosophically, you meet with vice, injustice, and everywhere indignation; amusement flees before anger and morality. . . . In *The Misanthrope*, is not the spectacle of a loyally sincere and honest man, very much in love, whom his virtue finally overwhelms with ridicule and drives from society, a sad sight to see? . . . How everything changes under the hand of the mercurial Frenchman! how all this human ugliness is blotted out! how amusing is the spectacle which Molière has arranged for us! how we ought to thank the great artist for having transformed his subjects so well! At last we have a cheerful world, on canvas at least; we could not have it otherwise, but this we have. How pleasant it is to forget truth! what an art is that which divests us of ourselves! what a point of view which converts the contortions of suffering into funny grimaces! Gaiety has come upon us, the dearest possession of a Frenchman. The soldiers of Villars used to dance that they might forget they had no longer any bread. Of all French possessions, too, it is the best. This gift does not destroy thought, but it masks it. In Molière, truth is at the bottom, but concealed; he has heard the sobs of human tragedy, but he prefers not to re-echo them. It is quite enough to feel our wounds smart; let us not go to the theatre to see them again. Philosophy, while it reveals them, advises us not to think of them too much. Let us enliven our condition with the gaiety of easy conversation and light wit, as we would the chamber of sickness. . . . Let Alceste be grumpy and awkward. It is in the first place true, because our more valiant virtues are only the outbreaks of a temper out of harmony with circumstances; but, in addition, it will be amusing. His mishaps will cease to make him the martyr of justice; they will only be the consequences of a cross-grained character. . . . Molière is the only man who gives us models without getting pedantic, without trenching on the tragic, without growing solemn.

"This model is the 'respectable man,' as the phrase was, Philinte, Ariste, Clitandre, Eraste; there is no other who can at the same time instruct and amuse us. His talent has reflection for its basis, but it is cultivated by the world. His character has honesty for its basis, but it is in harmony with the world. You may imitate him without transgressing either reason or duty; he is neither a coxcomb nor a roisterer. You can imitate him without neglecting your interests or making yourself ridiculous; he is neither an ignoramus nor unmannerly. He has read and understands the jargon of Trissotin and Lycidas, but in order to pierce them through and through, to beat them with their own arguments, to set the gallery in a roar at their expense. He will discuss even morality and

THE MISANTHROPE.

(*LE MISANTHROPE*).

ACT I.

SCENE I.—PHILINTE, ALCESTE.

PHIL. What is the matter? What ails you?

ALC. (*Seated*). Leave me, I pray.

PHIL. But, once more, tell me what strange whim . . .

ALC. Leave me, I tell you, and get out of my sight.

PHIL. But you might at least listen to people, without getting angry.

ALC. I choose to get angry, and I do not choose to listen.

PHIL. I do not understand you in these abrupt moods, and although we are friends, I am the first . . .

ALC. (*Rising quickly*). I, your friend? Lay not that flattering unction to your soul. I have until now professed to be so; but after what I have just seen of you, I tell you candidly that I am such no longer; I have no wish to occupy a place in a corrupt heart.

PHIL. I am then very much to be blamed from your point of view, Alceste?

ALC. To be blamed? You ought to die from very shame; there is no excuse for such behaviour, and every man of honour must be disgusted at it. I see you almost stifle a man with caresses, show him the most ardent affection, and overwhelm him with protestations, offers, and

vows of friendship. Your ebullitions of tenderness know no bounds; and when I ask you who that man is, you can scarcely tell me his name; your feelings for him, the moment you have turned your back, suddenly cool; you speak of him most indifferently to me. Zounds! I call it unworthy, base, and infamous, so far to demean one's self as to act contrary to one's own feelings, and if, unfortunately, I had done such a thing, I should go that very instant, and hang myself out of sheer vexation.

PHIL. I do not see that it is a hanging matter at all; and I beg of you not to think it amiss if I ask you to show me some mercy, for I shall not hang myself, if it be all the same to you.

ALC. That is a sorry joke.

PHIL. But, seriously, what would you have people do?

ALC. I would have people be sincere, and that, like men of honour, no word be spoken that comes not from the heart.

PHIL. When a man comes and embraces you warmly, you must pay him back in his own coin, respond as best you can to his show of feeling, and return offer for offer, and vow for vow.

ALC. Not so. I cannot bear so base a method, which your fashionable people generally affect; there is nothing I detest so much as the contortions of these great time-and-lip servers, these affable dispensers of meaningless embraces, these obliging utterers of empty words, who vie with every one in civilities, and treat the man of worth and the fop alike. What good does it do if a man heaps endearments on you, vows that he is your friend, that he believes in you, is full of zeal for you, esteems and loves you, and lauds you to the skies, when he rushes to do the same to the first rascal he meets? No, no, no heart with the least self-respect cares for esteem so prostituted; he will hardly relish it, even when openly expressed, when he finds that he shares it with the whole universe. Preference must be based on esteem, and to esteem every one is to esteem no one. As you abandon yourself to the vices of the times, zounds! you are not the man for me. I decline this over-complaisant kindness, which uses no discrimination. I like to be distinguished; and, to cut

the matter short, the friend of all mankind is no friend of mine.

PHIL. But when we are of the world, we must conform to the outward civilities which custom demands.

ALC. I deny it. We ought to punish pitilessly that shameful pretence of friendly intercourse. I like a man to be a man, and to show on all occasions the bottom of his heart in his discourse. Let that be the thing to speak, and never let our feelings be hidden beneath vain compliments.

PHIL. There are many cases in which plain speaking would become ridiculous, and could hardly be tolerated. And, with all due allowance for your unbending honesty, it is as well to conceal your feelings sometimes. Would it be right or decent to tell thousands of people what we think of them? And when we meet with some one whom we hate or who displeases us, must we tell him so openly?

ALC. Yes.

PHIL. What! Would you tell old Emilia, that it ill becomes her to set up for a beauty at her age, and that the paint she uses disgusts everyone?

ALC. Undoubtedly.

PHIL. Or Dorilas, that he is a bore, and that there is no one at court who is not sick of hearing him boast of his courage, and the lustre of his house?

ALC. Decidedly so.

PHIL. You are jesting.

ALC. I am not jesting at all; and I would not spare any one in that respect. It offends my eyes too much; and whether at Court or in town, I behold nothing but what provokes my spleen. I become quite melancholy and deeply grieved to see men behave to each other as they do. Everywhere I find nothing but base flattery, injustice, self-interest, deceit, roguery. I cannot bear it any longer; I am furious; and my intention is to break with all mankind.

PHIL. This philosophical spleen is somewhat too savage. I cannot but laugh to see you in these gloomy fits, and fancy that I perceive in us two, brought up together, the two brothers described in *The School for Husbands*, who . . .

ALC. Good Heavens! drop your insipid comparisons.

PHIL. Nay, seriously, leave off these vagaries. The world will not alter for all your meddling. And as plain speaking has such charms for you, I shall tell you frankly that this complaint of yours is as good as a play, wherever you go, and that all those invectives against the manners of the age, make you a laughing-stock to many people.

ALC. So much the better, Zounds! so much the better. That is just what I want. It is a very good sign, and I rejoice at it. All men are so odious to me, that I should be sorry to appear rational in their eyes.

PHIL. But do you wish harm to all mankind?

ALC. Yes; I have conceived a terrible hatred for them. D

PHIL. Shall all poor mortals, without exception, be included in this aversion? There are some, even in the age in which we live . . .

—ALC. No, they are all alike; and I hate all men: some, because they are wicked and mischievous; others because they lend themselves to the wicked, and have not that healthy contempt with which vice ought to inspire all virtuous minds. You can see how unjustly and excessively complacent people are to that bare-faced scoundrel with whom I am at law. You may plainly perceive the traitor through his mask; he is well known everywhere in his true colours; his rolling eyes and his honeyed tones impose only on those who do not know him. People are aware that this low-bred fellow, who deserves to be pilloried, has, by the dirtiest jobs, made his way in the world; and that the splendid position he has acquired makes merit repine and virtue blush. Yet whatever dishonourable epithets may be launched against him everywhere, nobody defends his wretched honour. Call him a rogue, an infamous wretch, a confounded scoundrel if you like, all the world will say "yea," and no one contradicts you. But for all that, his bowing and scraping are welcome everywhere; he is received, smiled upon, and wriggles himself into all kinds of society; and, if any appointment is to be secured by intriguing, he will carry the day over a man of the greatest worth. Zounds! these are mortal stabs to me, to see vice parleyed with; and

sometimes I feel suddenly inclined to fly into a wilderness far from the approach of men.

PHIL. Great Heaven ? let us torment ourselves a little less about the vices of our age, and be a little more lenient to human nature. Let us not scrutinize it with the utmost severity, but look with some indulgence at its failings. In society, we need virtue to be more pliable. If we are too wise, we may be equally to blame. Good sense avoids all extremes, and requires us to be soberly rational.⁴ This unbending and virtuous stiffness of ancient times shocks too much the ordinary customs of our own ; it requires too great perfection from us mortals ; we must yield to the times without being too stubborn ; it is the height of folly to busy ourselves in correcting the world. I, as well as yourself, notice a hundred things every day which might be better managed, differently enacted ; but whatever I may discover at any moment, people do not see me in a rage like you. I take men quietly just as they are ; I accustom my mind to bear with what they do ; and I believe that at Court, as well as in the city, my phlegm is as philosophical as your bile.

ALC. But this phlegm, good sir, you who reason so well, could it not be disturbed by anything ? And if perchance a friend should betray you ; if he forms a subtle plot to get hold of what is yours ; if people should try to spread evil reports about you, would you tamely submit to all this without flying into a rage ?

PHIL. Ay, I look upon all these faults of which you complain as vices inseparably connected with human nature ; in short, my mind is no more shocked at seeing a man a rogue ; unjust, or selfish, than at seeing vultures, eager for prey, mischievous apes, or fury-lashed wolves.

ALC. What ! I should see myself deceived, torn to pieces, robbed, without being . . . Zounds ! I shall say no more about it ; all this reasoning is full of impertinence !

PHIL. Upon my word, you would do well to keep silence. Rail a little less at your opponent, and attend a little more to your suit.

⁴ Compare St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, xii. 3, "Not to think more highly than he ought to think ; but to think soberly."

ALC. That I shall not do ; that is settled long ago.

PHIL. But whom then do you expect to solicit for you?

ALC. Whom? Reason, my just right, equity.

PHIL. Shall you not pay a visit to any of the judges?

ALC. No. Is my cause unjust or dubious?

PHIL. I am agreed on that ; but you know what harm intrigues do, and . . .

ALC. No. I am resolved not to stir a step. I am either right or wrong.

PHIL. Do not trust to that.

ALC. I shall not budge an inch.

PHIL. Your opponent is powerful, and by his underhand work, may induce . . .

ALC. It does not matter.

PHIL. You will make a mistake.

ALC. Be it so. I wish to see the end of it.

PHIL. But . . .

ALC. I shall have the satisfaction of losing my suit.

PHIL. But after all . . .

ALC. I shall see by this trial whether men have sufficient impudence, are wicked, villainous, and perverse enough to do me this injustice in the face of the whole world.

PHIL. What a strange fellow!

ALC. I could wish, were it to cost me ever so much, that, for the fun of the thing, I lost my case.

PHIL. But people will really laugh at you, Alceste, if they hear you go on in this fashion.

ALC. So much the worse for those who will.

PHIL. But this rectitude, which you exact so carefully in every case, this absolute integrity in which you intrench yourself, do you perceive it in the lady you love? As for me, I am astonished that, appearing to be at war with the whole human race, you yet, notwithstanding everything that can render it odious to you, have found aught to charm your eyes. And what surprises me still more, is the strange choice your heart has made. The sincere Éliante has a liking for you, the prude Arsinoé looks with favour upon you, yet your heart does not respond to their passion; whilst you wear the chains of Célimène, who sports with you, and whose coquettish humour and malicious wit seems to accord so well with the manner of the

times. How comes it that, hating these things as mortally as you do, you endure so much of them in that lady? Are they no longer faults in so sweet a charmer? Do not you perceive them, or if you do, do you excuse them?

ALC. Not so. The love I feel for this young widow does not make me blind to her faults, and, notwithstanding the great passion with which she has inspired me, I am the first to see, as well as to condemn, them. But for all this, do what I will, I confess my weakness, she has the art of pleasing me. In vain I see her faults; I may even blame them; in spite of all, she makes me love her. Her charms conquer everything, and, no doubt, my sincere love will purify our heart from the vices of our times.⁵

PHIL. If you accomplish this, it will be no small task. Do you believe yourself beloved by her?

ALC. Yes, certainly! I should not love her at all, did I not think so.

PHIL. But if her love for you is so apparent, how comes it that your rivals cause you so much uneasiness?

ALC. It is because a heart, deeply smitten, claims all to itself; I come here only with the intention of telling her what, on this subject, my feelings dictate.

PHIL. Had I but to choose, her cousin Éliante would have all my love. Her heart, which values yours, is stable and sincere; and this more compatible choice would have suited you better.

ALC. It is true; my good sense tells me so every day; but good sense does not always rule love.

PHIL. Well, I fear much for your affections; and the hope which you cherish may perhaps . . .

SCENE II.—ORONTE, ALCESTE, PHILINTE.

ORON. (*To Alceste*). I have been informed yonder, that Éliante and Célimène have gone out to make some purchases. But as I heard that you were here, I came to tell you, most sincerely, that I have conceived the greatest regard for you, and that, for a long time, this regard has inspired me with the most ardent wish to be reckoned

⁵ Compare the supposed conversation between Molière and Chapelle in the Introductory Notice to *The Impromptu of Versailles*, Vol. I.

among your friends. Yes; I like to do homage to merit; and I am most anxious that a bond of friendship should unite us. I suppose that a zealous friend, and of my standing, is not altogether to be rejected. (*All this time Alceste has been musing, and seems not to be aware that Oronte is addressing him. He looks up only when Oronte says to him,*)—It is to you, if you please, that this speech is addressed.

ALC. To me, sir?

ORON. To you. Is it in any way offensive to you?

ALC. Not in the least. But my surprise is very great; and I did not expect that honour.

ORON. The regard in which I hold you ought not to astonish you, and you can claim it from the whole world.

ALC. Sir . . .

ORON. Our whole kingdom contains nothing above the dazzling merit which people discover in you.

ALC. Sir . . .

ORON. Yes; for my part, I prefer you to the most important in it.

ALC. Sir . . .

ORON. May Heaven strike me dead, if I lie! And, to convince you, on this very spot, of my feelings, allow me, sir, to embrace you with all my heart, and to solicit a place in your friendship. Your hand, if you please. Will you promise me your friendship?

ALC. Sir . . .

ORON. What! you refuse me?

ALC. Sir, you do me too much honour; but friendship is a sacred thing,⁶ and to lavish it on every occasion is surely to profane it. Judgment and choice should preside at such a compact; we ought to know more of each other before engaging ourselves; and it may happen that our dispositions are such that we may both of us repent of our bargain.

ORON. Upon my word! that is wisely said; and I esteem you all the more for it. Let us therefore leave it to

⁶ The original has *l'amitié demande un peu plus de mystère*, friendship demands a little more mystery. I imagine this to be an allusion to the mystery of religion. Hence the idea of sacredness; for otherwise it is unintelligible why friendship should demand mystery.

time to form such a pleasing bond ; but, meanwhile I am entirely at your disposal. If you have any business at Court, every one knows how well I stand with the King ; I have his private ear ; and, upon my word, he treats me in everything with the utmost intimacy. In short, I am yours in every emergency ; and, as you are a man of brilliant parts, and to inaugurate our charming amity, I come to read you a sonnet which I made a little while ago, and to know whether it be good enough for publicity.

ALC. I am not fit, sir, to decide such a matter. You will therefore excuse me.

ORON. Why so ?

ALC. I have the failing of being a little more sincere in those things than is necessary.

ORON. The very thing I ask ; and I should have reason to complain, if, in laying myself open to you that you might give me your frank opinion, you should deceive me, and disguise anything from me.

ALC. If that be the case, sir, I am perfectly willing.

ORON. *Sonnet* . . . It is a sonnet *Hope* It is to a lady who flattered my passion with some hope. *Hope* They are not long, pompous verses, but mild, tender and melting little lines.

(At every one of these interruptions he looks at Alceste.)

ALC. We shall see.

ORON. Hope I do not know whether the style will strike you as sufficiently clear and easy, and whether you will approve of my choice of words.

ALC. We shall soon see, sir.

ORON. Besides, you must know that I was only a quarter of an hour in composing it.

ALC. Let us hear, sir ; the time signifies nothing.

ORON. *(Reads)*. *Hope, it is true, oft gives relief,*
Rocks for a while our tedious pain,
But what a poor advantage, Phillis,
When nought remains, and all is gone !

PHIL. I am already charmed with this little bit.

ALC. *(Softly to Philinte)*. What ! do you mean to tell me that you like this stuff ?

ORON. *You once had some complacency,
But less would have sufficed,
You should not take that trouble
To give me nought but hope.*

PHIL. In what pretty terms these thoughts are put !

ALC. How now ! you vile flatterer, you praise this rubbish !

ORON. *If I must wait eternally,
My passion, driven to extremes,
Will fly to death.
Your tender cares cannot prevent this,
Fair Phillis, aye we're in despair,
When we must hope for ever.*

PHIL. The conclusion is pretty, amorous, admirable.

ALC. (*Softly, and aside to Philinte*). A plague on the conclusion ! I wish you had concluded to break your nose, you poisoner to the devil !

PHIL. I never heard verses more skilfully turned.⁷

ALC. (*Softly, and aside*). Zounds ! . . .

ORON. (*To Philinte*). You flatter me ; and you are under the impression perhaps . . .

PHIL. No, I am not flattering at all.

ALC. (*Softly, and aside*). What else are you doing, you wretch ?

ORON. (*To Alceste*). But for you, you know our agreement. Speak to me, I pray, in all sincerity.

ALC. These matters, sir, are always more or less delicate, and every one is fond of being praised for his wit. But I was saying one day to a certain person, who shall be nameless, when he showed me some of his verses, that a gentleman ought at all times to exercise a great control over that itch for writing which sometimes attacks us, and should keep a tight rein over the strong propensity which one has to display such amusements ; and that, in the frequent anxiety to show their productions, people are frequently exposed to act a very foolish part.

⁷ One of the commentators of Molière, Aimé-Martin, thinks that the praises which Philinte bestows on Oronte's sonnet prove his kind feeling. I think the saying, " I never heard verses more skilfully turned," proves more than this.

ORON. Do you wish to convey to me by this that I am wrong in desiring . . .

ALC. I do not say that exactly. But I told him that writing without warmth becomes a bore ; that there needs no other weakness to disgrace a man ; that, even if people on the other hand, had a hundred good qualities, we view them from their worst sides.

ORON. Do you find anything to object to in my sonnet ?

ALC. I do not say that. But, to keep him from writing, I set before his eyes how, in our days, that desire has spoiled a great many very worthy people.

ORON. Do I write badly ? Am I like them in any way ?

ALC. I do not say that. But, in short, I said to him, What pressing need is there for you to rhyme, and what the deuce drives you into print ? If we can pardon the sending into the world of a badly-written book, it will only be in those unfortunate men who write for their livelihood. Believe me, resist your temptations, keep these effusions from the public, and do not, how much soever you may be asked, forfeit the reputation which you enjoy at Court of being a man of sense and a gentleman, to take, from the hands of a greedy printer, that of a ridiculous and wretched author. That is what I tried to make him understand.

ORON. This is all well and good, and I seem to understand you. But I should like to know what there is in my sonnet to . . .

ALC. Candidly, you had better put it in your closet. You have been following bad models, and your expressions are not at all natural. Pray what is—*Rocks for a while our tedious pain ?* And what, *When nought remains, and all is gone ?* What, *You should not take that trouble to give me nought but hope ?* And what, *Phyllis, aye we're in despair when we must hope for ever ?* This figurative style, that people are so vain of, is beside all good taste and truth ; it is only a play upon words, sheer affectation, and it is not thus that nature speaks. The wretched taste of the age is what I dislike in this. Our forefathers, unpolished as they were, had a much better one ; and I value all that is admired now-a-days far less than an old song which I am going to repeat to you :

*"Had our great monarch granted me
His Paris large and fair;
And I straightway must quit for aye
The love of my true dear;
Then would I say, King Hall, I pray,
Take back your Paris fair,
I love much mo my dear, I trow,
I love much mo my dear."*

This versification is not rich, and the style is antiquated; but do you not see that it is far better than all those trumpery trifles against which good sense revolts, and that in this, passion speaks from the heart?

*"Had our great monarch granted me
His Paris large and fair;
And I straightway must quit for aye
The love of my true dear;
Then would I say, King Hall, I pray,
Take back your Paris fair,
I love much mo my dear, I trow,
I love much mo my dear."*

This is what a really loving heart would say. (*To Philinte, who is laughing*). Yes, master wag, in spite of all your wit, I care more for this than for all the florid pomp and the tinsel which everybody is admiring now-a-days.

ORON. And I, I maintain that my verses are very good.

ALC. Doubtless you have your reasons for thinking them so; but you will allow me to have mine, which, with your permission, will remain independent.

ORON. It is enough for me that others prize them.

ALC. That is because they know how to dissemble, which I do not.

ORON. Do you really believe that you have such a great share of wit?

ALC. If I praised your verses, I should have more.

ORON. I shall do very well without your approbation.

ALC. You will have to do without it, if it be all the same.

ORON. I should like much to see you compose some on the same subject, just to have a sample of your style.

ALC. I might, perchance, make some as bad ; but I should take good care not to show them to any one.

ORON. You are mighty positive ; and this great sufficiency . . .

ALC. Pray, seek some one else to flatter you, and not me.

ORON. But, my little sir, drop this haughty tone.

ALC. In truth, my big sir, I shall do as I like.

PHIL. (*Coming between them*). Stop, gentlemen ! that is carrying the matter too far. Cease, I pray.

ORON. Ah ! I am wrong, I confess ; and I leave the field to you. I am your servant, sir, most heartily.

ALC. And I, sir, am your most humble servant.

SCENE III.—PHILINTE, ALCESTE.

PHIL. Well ! you see. By being too sincere, you have got a nice affair on your hands ; I saw that Oronte, in order to be flattered . . .

ALC. Do not talk to me.

PHIL. But . . .

ALC. No more society for me.

PHIL. Is it too much . . .

ALC. Leave me alone.

PHIL. If I . . .

ALC. Not another word.

PHIL. But what . . .

ALC. I will hear no more.

PHIL. But . . .

ALC. Again ?

PHIL. People insult . . .

ALC. Ah ! zounds ! this is too much. Do not dog my steps.

PHIL. You are making fun of me ; I shall not leave you.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—ALCESTE, CÉLIMÈNE.

ALC. Will you have me speak candidly to you, madam ?

Well, then, I am very much dissatisfied with your behaviour. I am very angry when I think of it; and I perceive that we shall have to break with each other. Yes; I should only deceive you were I to speak otherwise. Sooner or later a rupture is unavoidable; and if I were to promise the contrary a thousand times, I should not be able to bear this any longer.

CEL. Oh, I see! it is to quarrel with me, that you wished to conduct me home?

ALC. I do not quarrel. But your disposition, madam, is too ready to give any first comer an entrance into your heart. Too many admirers beset you; and my temper cannot put up with that.

CEL. Am I to blame for having too many admirers? Can I prevent people from thinking me amiable? and am I to take a stick to drive them away, when they endeavour by tender means to visit me?

ALC. No, madam, there is no need for a stick, but only a heart less yielding and less melting at their love-tales. I am aware that your good looks accompany you, go where you will; but your reception retains those whom your eyes attract; and that gentleness, accorded to those who surrender their arms, finishes on their hearts the sway which your charms began. The too agreeable expectation which you offer them increases their assiduities towards you; and your complacency, a little less extended, would drive away the great crowd of so many admirers. But, tell me, at least, Madam, by what good fortune Clitandre has the happiness of pleasing you so mightily? Upon what basis of merit and sublime virtue do you ground the honour of your regard for him? Is it by the long nail on his little finger that he has acquired the esteem which you display for him? Are you, like all the rest of the fashionable world, fascinated by the dazzling merit of his fair wig? Do his great rolls make you love him? Do his many ribbons charm you? Is it by the attraction of his large *rhingrave*,⁸ that he has conquered your heart, whilst at the same time he pretended to be your slave? Or have

⁸ The *rhingrave* was a large pair of breeches, introduced into France by a certain Count von Salm, who was called the *Rheingraf*.

his manner of smiling, and his falsetto voice,⁹ found out the secret of moving your feelings?

CEL. How unjustly you take umbrage at him! Do not you know why I countenance him; and that he has promised to interest all his friends in my lawsuit?

ALC. Lose your lawsuit, madam, with patience, and do not countenance a rival whom I detest.

CEL. But you are getting jealous of the whole world.

ALC. It is because the whole world is so kindly received by you.

CEL. That is the very thing to calm your frightened mind, because my goodwill is diffused over all: you would have more reason to be offended if you saw me entirely occupied with one.

ALC. But as for me, whom you accuse of too much jealousy, what have I more than any of them, madam, pray?

CEL. The happiness of knowing that you are beloved.

ALC. And what grounds has my love-sick heart for believing it?

CEL. I think that, as I have taken the trouble to tell you so, such an avowal ought to satisfy you.

ALC. But who will assure me that you may not, at the same time, say as much to everybody else perhaps?

CEL. Certainly, for a lover, this is a pretty amorous speech, and you make me out a very nice lady. Well! to remove such a suspicion, I retract this moment everything I have said; and no one but yourself shall for the future impose upon you. Will that satisfy you?

ALC. Zounds! why do I love you so! Ah! if ever I get heart-whole out of your hands, I shall bless Heaven for this rare good fortune. I make no secret of it; I do all that is possible to tear this unfortunate attachment from my heart; but hitherto my greatest efforts have been of no avail; and it is for my sins that I love you thus.

CEL. It is very true that your affection for me is unequalled.

⁹ Compare with this what Molière says in *The Impromptu of Versailles*, Vol. I., Scene iii., when he reprimands La Grange. "That is not the way in which Marquises talk. It must be a little higher. Most of these gentlemen affect a special tone to distinguish themselves from the vulgar."

ALC. As for that, I can challenge the whole world. My love for you cannot be conceived; and never, madam, has any man loved as I do.

CEL. Your method, however, is entirely new, for you love people only to quarrel with them; it is in peevish expressions alone that your feelings vent themselves; no one ever saw such a grumbling swain.

ALC. But it lies with you alone to dissipate this ill-humour. For mercy's sake let us make an end of all these bickerings; deal openly with each other, and try to put a stop . . . ¹⁰

SCENE II.—CÉLIMÈNE, ALCESTE, BASQUE.

CEL. What is the matter?

BAS. Acaste is below.

CEL. Very well! bid him come up.

SCENE III.—CÉLIMÈNE, ALCESTE.

ALC. What! can one never have a little private conversation with you? You are always ready to receive company; and you cannot, for a single instant, make up your mind to be "not at home."

CEL. Do you wish me to quarrel with Acaste?

ALC. You have such regard for people, which I by no means like.

CEL. He is a man never to forgive me, if he knew that his presence could annoy me.

ALC. And what is that to you, to inconvenience yourself so . . .

CEL. But, good Heaven! the amity of such as he is of importance; they are a kind of people who, I do not know how, have acquired the right to be heard at Court. They take their part in every conversation; they can do you no good, but they may do you harm; and, whatever support one may find elsewhere, it will never do to be on bad terms with these very noisy gentry.

¹⁰ It has been justly remarked by Génin, that Racine, who until then had treated love in *La Thébàïde*, and *Alexandre*, as a heroic passion, was taught, probably by *The Misanthrope*, to treat that passion in a natural manner; for thus he displays it in *Andromaque*, which appeared a year after Molière's play.

AC. And Geralde, Madam?

CEL. That tiresome story-teller! He never comes down from his nobleman's pedestal; he continually mixes with the best society, and never quotes any one of minor rank than a Duke, Prince, or Princess. Rank is his hobby, and his conversation is of nothing but horses, carriages, and dogs. He *thee's* and *thou's* persons of the highest standing, and the word *Sir* is quite obsolete with him.

CL. It is said that he is on the best of terms with Bélise.

CEL. Poor silly woman, and the dreariest company! When she comes to visit me, I suffer from martyrdom; one has to rack one's brains perpetually to find out what to say to her; and the impossibility of her expressing her thoughts allows the conversation to drop every minute. In vain you try to overcome her stupid silence by the assistance of the most commonplace topics; even the fine weather, the rain, the heat and the cold are subjects, which, with her, are soon exhausted. Yet for all that, her calls, unbearable enough, are prolonged to an insufferable length; and you may consult the clock, or yawn twenty times, but she stirs no more than a log of wood.

AC. What think you of Adraste?

CEL. Oh! What excessive pride! He is a man positively puffed out with conceit. His self-importance is never satisfied with the Court, against which he inveighs daily; and whenever an office, a place, or a living is bestowed on another, he is sure to think himself unjustly treated.

CL. But young Cléon, whom the most respectable people go to see, what say you of him?

CEL. That it is to his cook he owes his distinction, and to his table that people pay visits.

EL. He takes pains to provide the most dainty dishes.

CEL. True; but I should be very glad if he would not dish up himself. His foolish person is a very bad dish, which, to my thinking, spoils every entertainment which he gives.

PHIL. His uncle Damis is very much esteemed; what say you to him, Madam?

CEL. He is one of my friends.

PHIL. I think him a perfect gentleman, and sensible enough.

CEL. True; but he pretends to too much wit, which annoys me. He is always upon stilts, and, in all his conversations, one sees him labouring to say smart things. Since he took it into his head to be clever, he is so difficult to please that nothing suits his taste. He must needs find mistakes in everything that one writes, and thinks that to bestow praise does not become a wit, that to find fault shows learning, that only fools admire and laugh, and that, by not approving of anything in the works of our time, he is superior to all other people. Even in conversations he finds something to cavil at, the subjects are too trivial for his condescension; and, with arms crossed on his breast, he looks down from the height of his intellect with pity on what everyone says.

AC. Drat it! his very picture.

CL. (*To Célimène*). You have an admirable knack of portraying people to the life.

ALC. Capital, go on; my fine courtly friends. You spare no one, and every one will have his turn. Nevertheless, let but any one of those persons appear, and we shall see you rush to meet him, offer him your hand, and, with a flattering kiss, give weight to your protestations of being his servant.

CL. Why this to us? If what is said offends you, the reproach must be addressed to this lady.

ALC. No, gadzooks! it concerns you; for your assenting smiles draw from her wit all these slanderous remarks. Her satirical vein is incessantly recruited by the culpable incense of your flattery; and her mind would find fewer charms in raillery, if she discovered that no one applauded her. Thus it is that to flatterers we ought everywhere to impute the vices which are sown among mankind.

PHIL. But why do you take so great an interest in those people, for you would condemn the very things that are blamed in them?

CEL. And is not this gentleman bound to contradict? Would you have him subscribe to the general opinion; and must he not everywhere display the spirit of contradiction with which Heaven has endowed him? Other

people's sentiments can never please him. He always supports a contrary idea, and he would think himself too much of the common herd, were he observed to be of any one's opinion but his own. The honour of gainsaying has so many charms for him, that he very often takes up the cudgels against himself; he combats his own sentiments as soon as he hears them from other folks' lips.¹³

ALC. In short, madam, the laughers are on your side; and you may launch your satire against me.

PHIL. But it is very true, too, that you always take up arms against everything that is said; and, that your avowed spleen cannot bear people to be praised or blamed.

ALC. 'Sdeath! spleen against mankind is always seasonable, because they are never in the right, and I see that, in all their dealings, they either praise impertinently, or censure rashly.

CEL. But . . .

ALC. No, madam, no, though I were to die for it, you have pastimes which I cannot tolerate; and people are very wrong to nourish in your heart this great attachment to the very faults which they blame in you.

CL. As for myself, I do not know; but I openly acknowledge that hitherto I have thought this lady faultless.

AC. I see that she is endowed with charms and attractions; but the faults which she has have not struck me.

ALC. So much the more have they struck me; and far from appearing blind, she knows that I take care to reproach her with them. The more we love any one, the

¹³ This passage has been applied by Molière's contemporaries to the Duke de Montausier. It is said that this nobleman was one day walking with a friend, near the Tuileries, when the latter remarked how foolish Renard, the proprietor of some gardens close by, was to allow the public to enter there, instead of keeping them only for himself and his friends. The Duke replied that Renard could not do better than receive respectable people in his grounds, and proved this convincingly. On the next day, being by accident in the same neighbourhood, Montausier's friend observed how praiseworthy it was in Renard to allow good company to enter his grounds; but the Duke replied, that only a madman could spoil his own and his friends' pleasures, in order to allow all the idlers of the court and town to saunter there. It is said that Ménage related this anecdote.

less we ought to flatter her. True love shows itself by overlooking nothing; and, were I a lady, I would banish all those mean-spirited lovers who submit to all my sentiments, and whose mild complacencies every moment offer up incense to my vagaries.

CEL. In short, if hearts were ruled by you we ought, to love well, to relinquish all tenderness, and make it the highest aim of perfect attachment to rail heartily at the persons we love.

EL. Love, generally speaking, is little apt to put up with these decrees, and lovers are always observed to extol their choice. Their passion never sees aught to blame in it, and in the beloved all things become loveable. They think their faults perfections, and invent sweet terms to call them by. The pale one vies with the jessamine in fairness; another, dark enough to frighten people, becomes an adorable brunette; the lean one has a good shape and is lithe; the stout one has a portly and majestic bearing; the slattern, who has few charms, passes under the name of a careless beauty; the giantess seems a very goddess in their sight; the dwarf is an epitome of all the wonders of Heaven; the proud one has a soul worthy of a diadem; the artful brims with wit; the silly one is very good-natured; the chatterbox is good-tempered; and the silent one modest and reticent. Thus a passionate swain loves even the very faults of those of whom he is enamoured.¹⁴

ALC. And I maintain that . . .

CEL. Let us drop the subject, and take a turn or two in the gallery. What! are you going, gentlemen?

CL. AND AC. No, no, madam.

ALC. The fear of their departure troubles you very much. Go when you like, gentlemen; but I tell you beforehand that I shall not leave until you leave.

¹⁴ I have already said that Grimarest stated that Molière had prepared a translation of Lucretius in verse; and that he intended to read part of it at an evening-party given at the house of M. du Broussin, in 1664, but did not think his verses worthy of coming after those of Boileau, who read before him. All this rests upon very slight tradition; the only traces of Lucretius in Molière's works are a few lines of *The Citizen who apes the Nobleman* (See Vol. III.), and the above passage.

Ac. Unless it inconveniences this lady, I have nothing to call me elsewhere the whole day.

Cl. I, provided I am present when the King retires,¹⁵ I have no other matter to call me away.

Cel. (*To Alceste*). You only joke, I fancy.

Alc. Not at all. We shall soon see whether it is me of whom you wish to get rid.

SCENE VI.—ALCESTE, CÉLIMÈNE, ÉLIANTE, ACASTE, PHILINTE, CLITANDRE, BASQUE.

Bas. (*To Alceste*). There is a man down stairs, sir, who wishes to speak to you on business which cannot be postponed.

Alc. Tell him that I have no such urgent business.

Bas. He wears a jacket with large plaited skirts embroidered with gold.

Cel. (*To Alceste*). Go and see who it is, or else let him come in.

SCENE VII.—ALCESTE, CÉLIMÈNE, ÉLIANTE, ACASTE, PHILINTE, CLITANDRE, A GUARD OF THE MARÉCHAUSSEE.¹⁶

Alc. (*Going to meet the guard*). What may be your pleasure? Come in, sir.

Guard. I would have a few words privately with you, sir.

Alc. You may speak aloud, sir, so as to let me know.

Guard. The Marshalls of France, whose commands I bear, hereby summon you to appear before them immediately, sir.

Alc. Whom? Me, sir?

Guard. Yourself.

Alc. And for what?

¹⁵ The original has *petit couche*. See Vol. I., p. 151.

¹⁶ The dress of the guards of the *maréchaussée*, was something like that of the "buffetiers" of the Tower of London; hence the allusion to "the plaited skirts." The *maréchaux de France* formed a tribunal, which inquired into affairs of honour among noblemen or officers. The *garde de la connétablie* was under its orders, and made the offended parties appear before the tribunal of the *maréchaussée*, who settled the reparation to be given. See also page 191, note 3.

PHIL. (*To Alceste*). It is this ridiculous affair between you and Oronte.

CEL. (*To Philinte*). What do you mean?

PHIL. Oronte and he have been insulting each other just now about some trifling verses which he did not like; and the Marshalls wish to nip the affair in the bud.

ALC. But I shall never show any base complacency.

PHIL. But you must obey the summons: come, get ready.

ALC. How will they settle this between us? Will the edict of these gentlemen oblige me to approve of the verses which are the cause of our quarrel? I will not retract what I have said; I think them abominable.

PHIL. But with a little milder tone . . .

ALC. I will not abate one jot; the verses are execrable.

PHIL. You ought to show some more accommodating spirit. Come along.

ALC. I shall go, but nothing shall induce me to retract.

PHIL. Go and show yourself.

ALC. Unless an express order from the King himself commands me to approve of the verses which cause all this trouble, I shall ever maintain, egad, that they are bad, and that a fellow deserves hanging for making them.¹⁷ (*To Clitandre and Acaste who are laughing*). Hang it! gentlemen, I did not think I was so amusing.

CEL. Go quickly whither you are wanted.

ALC. I am going, madam; but shall come back here to finish our discussion.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—CLITANDRE, ACASTE.

CL. My dear marquis, you appear mightily pleased with yourself; everything amuses you, and nothing discomposes you. But really and truly, think you, without flat-

¹⁷ Tradition pretends that when Boileau was told that Colbert was very intimate with Chapelain, that even the King liked the latter's poem *La Pucelle*, and that therefore the first-mentioned should be more careful in his criticisms, he exclaimed, "The King and M. Colbert may do what they please, but unless his Majesty expressly commands me to consider the verses of M. Chapelain good, I shall always maintain that a man, after having written such a poem, deserves to be hanged."

tering yourself, that you have good reasons for appearing so joyful.

Ac. Egad, I do not find, on looking at myself, any matter to be sorrowful about. I am wealthy, I am young, and descend from a family which, with some appearance of truth, may be called noble; and I think that, by the rank which my lineage confers upon me, there are very few offices to which I might not aspire. As for courage, which we ought especially to value, it is well known—this without vanity—that I do not lack it; and people have seen me carry on an affair of honour in a manner sufficiently vigorous and brisk. As for wit, I have some, no doubt; and as for good taste, to judge and reason upon everything without study; at “first nights,” of which I am very fond, to take my place as a critic upon the stage, to give my opinion as a judge, to applaud, and point out the best passages by repeated bravoos, I am sufficiently adroit; I carry myself well, and am good-looking, have particularly fine teeth, and a good figure. I believe, without flattering myself, that, as for dressing in good taste, very few will dispute the palm with me. I find myself treated with every possible consideration, very much beloved by the fair sex; and I stand very well with the King. With all that, I think, dear marquis, that one might be satisfied with oneself anywhere.

Cl. True. But, finding so many easy conquests elsewhere, why come you here to utter fruitless sighs?

Ac. I? Zounds! I have neither the wish nor the disposition to put up with the indifference of any woman. I leave it to awkward and ordinary people to burn constantly for cruel fair maidens, to languish at their feet, and to bear with their severities, to invoke the aid of sighs and tears, and to endeavour, by long and persistent assiduities, to obtain what is denied to their little merit. But men of my stamp, marquis, are not made to love on trust, and be at all the expenses themselves. Be the merit of the fair ever so great, I think, thank Heaven, that we have our value as well as they; that it is not reasonable to enthrall a heart like mine without its costing them anything; and that, to weigh everything in a just scale, the advances should be, at least, reciprocal.

CL. Then you think that you are right enough here, marquis?

AC. I have some reason, marquis, to think so.

CL. Believe me, divest yourself of this great mistake? you flatter yourself, dear friend, and are altogether self-deceived.

AC. It is true. I flatter myself, and am, in fact, altogether, self-deceived.

CL. But what causes you to judge your happiness to be complete?

AC. I flatter myself.

CL. Upon what do you ground your belief?

AC. I am altogether self-deceived.

CL. Have you any sure proofs?

AC. I am mistaken, I tell you.

CL. Has Célimène made you any secret avowal of her inclinations?

AC. No, I am very badly treated by her.

CL. Answer me, I pray.

AC. I meet with nothing but rebuffs.

CL. A truce to your raillery; and tell me what hope she has held out to you.

AC. I am the rejected, and you are the lucky one. She has a great aversion to me, and one of these days I shall have to hang myself.

CL. Nonsense. Shall we two, marquis, to adjust our love affairs, make a compact together? Whenever one of us shall be able to show a certain proof of having the greater share in Célimène's heart, the other shall leave the field free to the supposed conqueror, and by that means rid him of an obstinate rival.

AC. Egad! you please me with these words, and I agree to that from the bottom of my heart. But, hush.

SCENE II.—CÉLIMÈNE, ACASTE, CLITANDRE.

CEL. What! here still?

CLI. Love, madam, detains us.

CEL. I hear a carriage below. Do you know whose it is?

CLI. No.

SCENE III.—CÉLIMÈNE, ACASTE, CLITANDRE, BASQUE.

BAS. Arsinoé, Madam, is coming up to see you.

CEL. What does the woman want with me?

BAS. Éliante is down stairs talking to her.

CEL. What is she thinking about, and what brings her here?

AC. She has everywhere the reputation of being a consummate prude, and her fervent zeal . . .

CEL. Psha, downright humbug. In her inmost soul she is as worldly as any; and her every nerve is strained to hook some one, without being successful, however. She can only look with envious eyes on the accepted lovers of others; and in her wretched condition, forsaken by all, she is for ever railing against the blindness of the age. She endeavours to hide the dreadful isolation of her home under a false cloak of prudishness; and to save the credit of her feeble charms, she brands as criminal the power which they lack. Yet a swain would not come at all amiss to the lady; and she has even a tender hankering after Alceste. Every attention that he pays me, she looks upon as a theft committed by me, and as an insult to her attractions; and her jealous spite, which she can hardly hide, breaks out against me at every opportunity, and in an underhand manner. In short, I never saw anything, to my fancy, so stupid. She is impertinent to the last degree . .

SCENE IV.—ARSINOÉ, CÉLIMÈNE, CLITANDRE, ACASTE.

CEL. Ah! what happy chance brings you here, madam? I was really getting uneasy about you.

ARS. I have come to give you some advice as a matter of duty.

CEL. How very glad I am to see you!

(Exeunt Clitandre and Acaste, laughing).

SCENE V.—ARSINOÉ, CÉLIMÈNE.

ARS. They could not have left at a more convenient opportunity.

CEL. Shall we sit down?

ARS. It is not necessary. Friendship, madam, must especially show itself in matters which may be of consequence to us; and as there are none of greater importance than honour and decorum, I come to prove to you, by an

advice which closely touches your reputation, the friendship which I feel for you. Yesterday I was with some people of rare virtue, where the conversation turned upon you; and there, your conduct, which is causing some stir, was unfortunately, madam, far from being commended. That crowd of people, whose visits you permit, your gallantry and the noise it makes, were criticised rather more freely and more severely than I could have wished. You can easily imagine whose part I took. I did all I could to defend you. I exonerated you, and vouched for the purity of your heart, and the honesty of your intentions. But you know there are things in life, which one cannot well defend, although one may have the greatest wish to do so; and I was at last obliged to confess that the way in which you lived did you some harm; that, in the eyes of the world, it had a doubtful look; that there was no story so ill-natured as not to be everywhere told about it; and that, if you liked, your behaviour might give less cause for censure. Not that I believe that decency is in any way outraged. Heaven forbid that I should harbour such a thought! But the world is so ready to give credit to the faintest shadow of a crime, and it is not enough to live blameless one's self. Madam, I believe you to be too sensible not to take in good part this useful counsel, and not to ascribe it only to the inner promptings of an affection that feels an interest in your welfare.

CEL. Madam, I have a great many thanks to return you. Such counsel lays me under an obligation; and, far from taking it amiss, I intend this very moment to repay the favour, by giving you an advice which also touches your reputation closely; and as I see you prove yourself my friend by acquainting me with the stories that are current of me, I shall follow so nice an example, by informing you what is said of you. In a house the other day, where I paid a visit, I met some people of exemplary merit, who, while talking of the proper duties of a well spent life, turned the topic of the conversation upon you, madam. There your prudishness and your too fervent zeal were not at all cited as a good example. This affectation of a grave demeanour, your eternal conversations on wisdom and honour, your mincings and mouthings at the slightest shadows of in-

dency, which an innocent though ambiguous word may convey, that lofty esteem in which you hold yourself, and those pitying glances which you cast upon all, your frequent lectures and your acrid censures on things which are pure and harmless ; all this, if I may speak frankly to you, madam, was blamed unanimously. What is the good, said they, of this modest mien and this prudent exterior, which is belied by all the rest ? She says her prayers with the utmost exactness ; but she beats her servants and pays them no wages. She displays great fervour in every place of devotion ; but she paints and wishes to appear handsome. She covers the nudities in her pictures ; but loves the reality. As for me, I undertook your defence against everyone, and positively assured them that it was nothing but scandal ; but the general opinion went against me, and they came to the conclusion that you would do well to concern yourself less about the actions of others, and take a little more pains with your own ; that one ought to look a long time at one's self before thinking of condemning other people ; that when we wish to correct others, we ought to add the weight of a blameless life ; and that even then, it would be better to leave it to those whom Heaven has ordained for the task. Madam, I also believe you to be too sensible not to take in good part this useful counsel, and not to ascribe it only to the inner promptings of an affection that feels an interest in your welfare.

AR. To whatever we may be exposed when we reprove, I did not expect this retort, madam, and, by its very sting, I see how my sincere advice has hurt your feelings.

CEL. On the contrary, madam ; and, if we were reasonable, those mutual counsels would become customary. If honestly made use of, it would to a great extent destroy the excellent opinion people have of themselves. It depends entirely on you whether we shall continue this trustworthy practice with equal zeal, and whether we shall take great care to tell each other, between ourselves, what we hear, you of me, I of you.

AR. Ah ! madam, I can hear nothing said of you. It is in me that people find so much to reprove.

CEL. Madam, it is easy, I believe, to blame or praise

everything; and everyone may be right, according to their age and taste. There is a time for gallantry, there is one also for prudishness. One may out of policy take to it, when youthful attractions have faded away. It sometimes serves to hide vexatious ravages of time. I do not say that I shall not follow your example, one of these days. Those things come with old age; but twenty, as everyone well knows, is not an age to play the prude.

AR. You certainly pride yourself upon a very small advantage, and you boast terribly of your age. Whatever difference there may be between your years and mine, there is no occasion to make such a tremendous fuss about it; and I am at a loss to know, madam, why you should get so angry, and what makes you goad me in this manner.

CEL. And I, madam, am at an equal loss to know why one hears you inveigh so bitterly against me everywhere. Must I always suffer for your vexations? Can I help it, if people refuse to pay you any attentions? If men will fall in love with me, and will persist in offering me each day those attentions of which your heart would wish to see me deprived, I cannot alter it, and it is not my fault. I leave you the field free, and do not prevent you from having charms to attract people.

AR. Alas! and do you think that I would trouble myself about this crowd of lovers of which you are so vain, and that it is not very easy to judge at what price they may be attracted now-a-days? Do you wish to make it be believed, that, judging by what is going on, your merit alone attracts this crowd; that their affection for you is strictly honest, and that it is for nothing but your virtue that they all pay you their court? People are not blinded by those empty pretences; the world is not duped in that way; and I see many ladies who are capable of inspiring a tender feeling, yet who do not succeed in attracting a crowd of beaux; and from that fact we may draw our conclusion that those conquests are not altogether made without some great advances; that no one cares to sigh for us, for our handsome looks only; and that the attentions bestowed on us are generally dearly bought. Do not therefore puff yourself up with vain-glory about the trifling advantages of a poor victory; and moderate

slightly the pride on your good looks, instead of looking down upon people on account of them. If I were at all envious about your conquests, I dare say, that I might manage like other people; be under no restraint, and thus show plainly that one may have lovers, when one wishes for them.

CEL. Do have some then, madam, and let us see you try it; endeavour to please by this extraordinary secret; and without . . .

AR. Let us break off this conversation, madam, it might excite too much both your temper and mine; and I would have already taken my leave, had I not been obliged to wait for my carriage.

CEL. Please stay as long as you like, and do not hurry yourself on that account, madam. But instead of wearying you any longer with my presence, I am going to give you some more pleasant company. This gentleman, who comes very opportunely, will better supply my place in entertaining you.¹⁸

SCENE VI.—ALCESTE, CÉLIMÈNE, ARSINOÉ.

CEL. Alceste, I have to write a few lines, which I cannot well delay. Please to stay with this lady; she will all the more easily excuse my rudeness.

SCENE VII.—ALCESTE, ARSINOÉ.

AR. You see, I am left here to entertain you, until my coach comes round. She could have devised no more charming treat for me, than such a conversation. Indeed, people of exceptional merit attract the esteem and love of

¹⁸One of the commentators of Molière, M. Auger, has justly observed how admirably Célimène and Arsinoé vent their malignity, under the pretext of doing their duty as friends. Both are equally bad, both hate and insult each other; but yet, although their feelings and situations are the same, Molière shows with a master hand the difference between them. The prude Arsinoé is bitter and angry in her speech; the coquette Célimène jocular and calm; the first, by getting in a rage, is wholly off her guard, and exposes herself to the most terrible blows; the second, keeping cool, preserves all her advantages, and makes the best possible use of them. The reason of it is that the one is of a certain age, and of uncertain charms, whilst the other is in the flower of her youth and beauty; the one is a hypocrite, whose mask has been snatched off; the other is a rather impudent young woman, whose faults are obvious.

every one ; and yours has undoubtedly some secret charm, which makes me feel interested in all your doings. I could wish that the Court, with a real regard to your merits would do more justice to your deserts. You have reason to complain ; and it vexes me to see that day by day nothing is done for you.

ALC. For me, madam ? And by what right could I pretend to anything ? What service have I rendered to the State ? Pray, what have I done, so brilliant in itself, to complain of the Court doing nothing for me ?

AR. Not everyone whom the State delights to honour, has rendered signal services ; there must be an opportunity as well as the power ; and the abilities which you allow us to perceive, ought . . .

ALC. For Heaven's sake, let us have no more of my abilities, I pray. What would you have the Court to do ? It would have enough to do, and have its hands full, to discover the merits of people.

AR. Sterling merit discovers itself. A great deal is made of yours in certain places ; and let me tell you that, not later than yesterday, you were highly spoken of in two distinguished circles, by people of very great standing.

ALC. As for that, madam, everyone is praised now-a-days, and very little discrimination is shown in our times. Everything is equally endowed with great merit, so that it is no longer an honour to be lauded. Praises abound, they throw them at one's head, and even my valet is put in the gazette.¹⁹

AR. As for me, I could wish that, to bring yourself into greater notice, some place at Court might tempt you. If you will only give me a hint that you seriously think about it, a great many engines might be set in motion to serve you ; and I know some people whom I could em-

¹⁹ The only newspaper then (1666) known was the official *Gazette de France*, established by Renaudot in 1631 ; Denis de Sallo founded, in 1665, a literary and scientific paper, called *le Journal des Savants*. As the news given by the *Gazette* was very meagre, there arose the *gazettes secrètes*, which were rigorously prosecuted, and, if possible, suppressed, and the authors, if got hold of, publicly flagellated and imprisoned.—Compare Byron's line in *Don Juan*, "And even my servant's put in the Gazette."

ploy for you, and who would manage the matter smoothly enough.

ALC. And what should I do when I got there, madam? My disposition rather prompts me to keep away from it. Heaven, when ushering me into the world, did not give me a mind suited for the atmosphere of a Court. I have not the qualifications necessary for success, nor for making my fortune there. To be open and candid is my chief talent; I possess not the art of deceiving people in conversation; and he who has not the gift of concealing his thoughts, ought not to stay long in those places. When not at Court, one has not, doubtless, that standing, and the advantage of those honourable titles which it bestows now-a-days; but, on the other hand, one has not the vexation of playing the silly fool. One has not to bear a thousand galling rebuffs; one is not, as it were, forced to praise the verses of mister so-and-so, to laud madam such and such, and to put up with the whims of some ingenuous marquis.²⁰

AR. Since you wish it, let us drop the subject of the Court: but I cannot help grieving for your amours; and, to tell you my opinions candidly on that head, I could heartily wish your affections better bestowed. You certainly deserve a much happier fate, and she who has fascinated you is unworthy of you.

ALC. But in saying so, madam, remember, I pray, that this lady is your friend.

AR. True. But really my conscience revolts at the thought of suffering any longer the wrong that is done to you. The position in which I see you afflicts my very soul, and I caution you that your affections are betrayed.

ALC. This is certainly showing me a deal of good feeling, madam, and such information is very welcome to a lover.

AR. Yes, for all Célimène is my friend, I do not hesitate to call her unworthy of possessing the heart of a man of honour; and hers only pretends to respond to yours.

²⁰ This is, I believe, the only direct attack Molière ever made against the Court, and by so doing, he ran the risk of offending Louis XIV. Part of this outbreak may be found in Juvenal, and also one of Boileau's satires.

ALC. That is very possible, madam, one cannot look into the heart ; but your charitable feelings might well have refrained from awakening such a suspicion as mine.

AR. Nothing is easier than to say no more about it, if you do not wish to be undeceived.

ALC. Just so. But whatever may be openly said on this subject is not half so annoying as hints thrown out ; and I for one would prefer to be plainly told that only which could be clearly proved.

AR. Very well ! and that is sufficient ; I can fully enlighten you upon this subject. I will have you believe nothing but what your own eyes see. Only have the kindness to escort me as far as my house ; and I will give you undeniable proof of the faithlessness of your fair one's heart ; ²¹ and if, after that, you can find charms in anyone else, we will perhaps find you some consolation.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—ÉLIANTE, PHILINTE.

PHIL. No, never have I seen so obstinate a mind, nor a reconciliation more difficult to effect. In vain was Alceste tried on all sides ; he would still maintain his opinion ; and never, I believe, has a more curious dispute engaged the attention of those gentlemen. “ No, gentlemen,” exclaimed he, “ I will not retract, and I shall agree with you on every point, except on this one. At what is Oronte offended ? and with what does he reproach me ? Does it reflect upon his honour that he cannot write well ? What is my opinion to him, which he has altogether wrongly construed ? One may be a perfect gentleman, and write bad verses ; those things have nothing to do with honour. I take him to be a gallant man in every way ; a man of standing, of merit, and courage, anything you like, but he is a wretched author. I shall praise, if

²¹ The original has a bad play on words, or rather on the antithesis of thought as shown in the sentence: *je vous ferai voir une preuve fidèle, de l'infidélité du cœur de votre belle*. This was quite in the taste of the times, though happily no longer so.

you wish, his mode of living, his lavishness, his skill in riding, in fencing, in dancing; but as to praising his verses, I am his humble servant; and if one has not the gift of composing better, one ought to leave off rhyming altogether, unless condemned to it on forfeit of one's life."²² In short, all the modification they could with difficulty obtain from him, was to say, in what he thought a much gentler tone—"I am sorry, Sir, to be so difficult to please; and out of regard for you, I could wish, with all my heart, to have found your sonnet a little better." And they compelled them to settle this dispute quickly with an embrace.

EL. He is very eccentric in his doings; but I must confess that I think a great deal of him; and the candour upon which he prides himself has something noble and heroic in it. It is a rare virtue now-a-days, and I, for one, should not be sorry to meet with it everywhere.

PHIL. As for me, the more I see of him, the more I am amazed at that passion to which his whole heart is given up. I cannot conceive how, with a disposition like his, he has taken it into his head to love at all; and still less can I understand how your cousin happens to be the person to whom his feelings are inclined.

EL. That shows that love is not always produced by compatibility of temper; and in this case, all the pretty theories of gentle sympathies are belied.²³

PHIL. But do you think him beloved in return, to judge from what we see?

EL. That is a point not easily decided. How can we judge whether it be true she loves? Her own heart is not so very sure of what it feels. It sometimes loves, without

²² See page 216, note 16. This passage reminds me of a nearly similar one in the ninth satire of Boileau, in which he says of Chapelain—

Let aye his honesty and his fair name be praised;
His candour and civility be highly valued;
Let him be gentle, pliant, upright, o'er-polite;
Amen, I say to this, not one word will I utter.
But when they say his writings are the very best,
When he's the amplest paid of all the wits in town,
When they declare him king of all the author's tribe,
Then I'm quite in a rage, anxious to scribble too.

²³ The word "Sympathy" was then used to express in an elegant manner, the feeling of love.

being quite aware of it, and at other times thinks it does, without the least grounds.

PHIL. I think that our friend will have more trouble with this cousin of yours than he imagines; and to tell you the truth, if he were of my mind, he would bestow his affections elsewhere; and by a better choice, we should see him, madam, profit by the kind feelings which your heart evinces for him.

EL. As for me, I do not mince matters, and I think that in such cases we ought to act with sincerity. I do not run counter to his tender feelings; on the contrary, I feel interested in them; and, if it depended only on me, I would unite him to the object of his love. But if, as it may happen in love affairs, his affections should receive a check, and if Célimène should respond to the love of any one else, I could easily be prevailed upon to listen to his addresses, and I should have no repugnance whatever to them on account of their rebuff elsewhere.

PHIL. Nor do I, from my side, oppose myself, madam, to the tender feelings which you entertain for him; and he himself, if he wished, could inform you what I have taken care to say to him on that score. But if, by the union of those two, you should be prevented from accepting his attentions, all mine would endeavour to gain that great favour which your kind feelings offer to him; only too happy, madam, to have them transferred to myself, if his heart could not respond to yours.

EL. You are in the humour to jest, Philinte.

PHIL. Not so, madam, I am speaking my inmost feelings. I only wait the opportune moment to offer myself openly, and am wishing most anxiously to hurry its advent.

SCENE II.—ALCESTE, ÉLIANTE, PHILINTE.

ALC. Ah, madam! obtain me justice for an offence which triumphs over all my constancy.

EL. What ails you? What disturbs you?

ALC. This much ails me, that it is death to me to think of it; and the upheaving of all creation would less overwhelm me than this accident. It is all over with me . . . My love . . . I cannot speak.

EL. Just endeavour to be composed.

ALC. Oh, just Heaven! must so many charms be allied to most odious vices of the most perfidious hearts.

EL. But, once more, what can have . . .

ALC. Alas! All is ruined! I am! I am betrayed! I am stricken to death! Célimène . . . would you credit it! Célimène deceives me and is faithless.²⁴

EL. Have you just grounds for believing so?

PHIL. Perhaps it is a suspicion, rashly conceived; and your jealous temper often harbours fancies . . .

ALC. Ah! 'Sdeath, please to mind your own business, sir. (*To Elhante*). Her treachery is but too certain, for I have in my pocket a letter in her own handwriting. Yes, madam, a letter, intended for Oronte, has placed before my eyes my disgrace and her shame; Oronte, whose addresses I believed she avoided, and whom, of all my rivals, I feared the least.

PHIL. A letter may deceive by appearances, and is sometimes not so culpable as may be thought.

ALC. Once more, sir, leave me alone, if you please, and trouble yourself only about your own concerns.

EL. You should moderate your passion; and the insult . . .

ALC. You must be left to do that, madam; it is to you that my heart has recourse to-day to free itself from this goading pain. Avenge me on an ungrateful and perfidious relative who basely deceives such constant tenderness. Avenge me for an act that ought to fill you with horror.

EL. I avenge you? How?

ALC. By accepting my heart. Take it, madam, instead of the false one; it is in this way that I can avenge myself upon her; and I shall punish her by the sincere attachment, and the profound love, the respectful cares, the eager devotions, the ceaseless attentions which this heart will henceforth offer up at your shrine.

EL. I certainly sympathize with you in your sufferings, and do not despise your proffered heart; but the wrong

²⁴ The words from "What ails you" till "faithless," are with some slight alterations, taken from *Don Garcia of Navarre*, Act iv., Scene 7, Vol. I.

done may not be so great as you think, and you might wish to forego this desire for revenge. When the injury proceeds from a beloved object, we form many designs which we never execute; we may find as powerful a reason as we like to break off the connection, the guilty charmer is soon again innocent; all the harm we wish her quickly vanishes, and we know what a lover's anger means.

ALC. No, no, madam, no. The offence is too cruel; there will be no relenting, and I have done with her. Nothing shall change the resolution I have taken, and I should hate myself for ever loving her again. Here she comes. My anger increases at her approach. I shall taunt her with her black guilt, completely put her to the blush, and, after that, bring you a heart wholly freed from her deceitful attractions.

SCENE III.—CÉLIMÈNE, ALCESTE.

ALC. (*Aside*). Grant, Heaven, that I may control my temper.

CEL. (*Aside*). Ah! (*To Alceste*). What is all this trouble that I see you in, and what mean those long-drawn sighs, and those black looks which you cast at me?

ALC. That all the wickedness of which a heart is capable is not to be compared to your perfidy; that neither fate, hell, nor Heaven in its wrath, ever produced anything so wicked as you are.²⁵

CEL. These are certainly pretty compliments, which I admire very much.

ALC. Do not jest. This is no time for laughing. Blush rather, you have cause to do so; and I have undeniable proofs of your treachery. This is what the agitations of my mind prognosticated; it was not without cause that my love took alarm; by these frequent suspicions, which were hateful to you, I was trying to discover the misfortune which my eyes have beheld; and in spite of all your care and your skill in dissembling, my star foretold me what I had to fear. But do not imagine that I will bear unavenged this slight of being insulted. I know that we

²⁵ These words, from "That all" till "you are," are also in *Don Garcia of Navarre*, Act iv., Scene 8, Vol. I.

have no command over our inclinations, that love will everywhere spring up spontaneously, that there is no entering a heart by force, and that every soul is free to name its conqueror: I should thus have no reason to complain if you had spoken to me without dissembling, and rejected my advances from the very beginning; my heart would then have been justified in blaming fortune alone. But to see my love encouraged by a deceitful avowal on your part, is an action so treacherous and perfidious, that it cannot meet with too great a punishment; and I can allow my resentment to do anything. Yes, yes; after such an outrage, fear everything; I am no longer myself, I am mad with rage.²⁶ My senses, struck by the deadly blow with which you kill me, are no longer governed by reason; I give way to the outbursts of a just wrath, and am no longer responsible for what I may do.

CEL. Whence comes, I pray, such a passion? Speak! Have you lost your senses?

ALC. Yes, yes, I lost them when, to my misfortune, I beheld you, and thus took the poison which kills me, and when I thought to meet with some sincerity in those treacherous charms that bewitched me.

CEL. Of what treachery have you to complain?

ALC. Ah! how double-faced she is! how well she knows how to dissemble! But I am fully prepared with the means of driving her to extremities. Cast your eyes here and recognize your writing. This picked-up note is sufficient to confound you, and such proof cannot easily be refuted.

CEL. And this is the cause of your perturbation of spirits?

ALC. You do not blush on beholding this writing!

CEL. And why should I blush?

ALC. What! You add boldness to craft! Will you disown this note because it bears no name?

CEL. Why should I disown it, since I wrote it.²⁷

²⁶ The whole of Alceste's speech, from "Blush rather" until "mad with rage," is, with some slight alterations, taken from *Don Garcia of Navarre*, Act iv., Scene 8, Vol. I.

²⁷ The words "Whence comes I pray" until "since I wrote it," are, with some slight alterations, taken from *Don Garcia of Navarre*, Act. ii., Scene 5, Vol. I.

ALC. And you can look at it without becoming confused at the crime of which its style accuses you !

CEL. You are, in truth, a very eccentric man.

ALC. What ! you thus out-brave this convincing proof ! And the contents so full of tenderness for Oronte, need have nothing in them to outrage me, or to shame you ?

CEL. Oronte ! Who told you that this letter is for him ?

ALC. The people who put it into my hands this day. But I will even suppose that it is for some one else. Has my heart any less cause to complain of yours ? Will you, in fact, be less guilty toward me ?

CEL. But if it is a woman to whom this letter is addressed, how can it hurt you, or what is there culpable in it ?

ALC. Hem ! The prevarication is ingenious, and the excuse excellent. I must own that I did not expect this turn ; and nothing but that was wanting to convince me. Do you dare to have recourse to such palpable tricks ? Do you think people entirely destitute of common sense ? Come, let us see a little by what subterfuge, with what air, you will support so palpable a falsehood ; and how you can apply to a woman every word of this note which evinces so much tenderness ! Reconcile, if you can, to hide your deceit, what I am about to read. . . .

CEL. It does not suit me to do so. I think it ridiculous that you should take so much upon yourself, and tell me to my face what you have the daring to say to me !

ALC. No, no, without flying into a rage, take a little trouble to explain these terms.

CEL. No, I shall do nothing of the kind, and it matters very little to me what you think upon the subject.

ALC. I pray you, show me, and I shall be satisfied, if this letter can be explained as meant for a woman.

CEL. Not at all. It is for Oronte ; and I will have you believe it. I accept all his attentions gladly ; I admire what he says, I like him, and I shall agree to whatever you please. Do as you like, and act as you think proper ; let nothing hinder you, and do not harass me any longer.

ALC. (*Aside*). Heavens ! can anything more cruel be conceived, and was ever heart treated like mine ? What !

I am justly angry with her, I come to complain, and I am quarrelled with instead ! My grief and my suspicions are excited to the utmost, I am allowed to believe everything, she boasts of everything ; and yet, my heart is still sufficiently mean not to be able to break the bonds that hold it fast, and not to arm itself with a generous contempt for the ungrateful object of which it is too much enamoured. (*To C  lim  ne*). Perfidious woman, you know well how to take advantage against myself of my great weakness, and to employ for your own purpose that excessive, astonishing, and fatal love which your treacherous looks have inspired !²⁸ Defend yourself at least from a crime that overwhelms even me, and cease that affectation of being culpable against me. Show me, if you can, the innocence of this note ; my affection will even consent to assist you. At any rate, endeavour to appear faithful, and I shall strive to believe you such.

CEL. Bah, you are mad with your jealous frenzies, and do not deserve the love which I have for you. I should much like to know what could compel me to stoop for you to the baseness of dissembling ; and why, if my heart were disposed towards another, I should not say so candidly. What ! does the kind assurance of my sentiments towards you not defend me sufficiently against all your suspicions ? Ought they to possess any weight at all with such a guarantee ? Is it not insulting me even to listen to them ? And since it is with the utmost difficulty that we can resolve to confess our love, since the strict honour of our sex, hostile to our passion, strongly opposes such a confession, ought a lover who sees such an obstacle overcome for his sake, doubt with impunity our avowal ? And is he not greatly to blame in not assuring himself of the truth of that which is never said but after a severe struggle with oneself ?²⁹ Begone, such suspicions deserve my anger, and you are not worthy of being cared for. I am

²⁸ The phrase "Perfidious woman" until "inspired" is with few alterations, to be found in *Don Garcia of Navarre*, Act iv., Scene 8, Vol. I.

²⁹ The words "And since it is" until "with one's self" are found, with some slight alterations, in *Don Garcia of Navarre*, Act iii., Scene 1, Vol. I.

silly, and am vexed at my own simplicity in still preserving the least kindness for you. I ought to place my affections elsewhere, and give you a just cause for complaint.

ALC. Ah! you traitress! mine is a strange infatuation for you; those tender expressions are, no doubt, meant only to deceive me. But it matters little, I must submit to my fate; my very soul is wrapt up in you; I will see to the bitter end how your heart will act towards me, and whether it will be black enough to deceive me.

CEL. No, you do not love me as you ought to love.

ALC. Indeed! Nothing is to be compared to my exceeding love; and, in its eagerness to show itself to the whole world, it goes even so far as to form wishes against you. Yes, I could wish that no one thought you handsome, that you were reduced to a miserable existence; that Heaven, at your birth, had bestowed upon you nothing; that you had no rank, no nobility, no wealth, so that I might openly proffer my heart, and thus make amends to you for the injustice of such a lot; and that, this very day, I might have the joy and the glory of seeing you owe everything to my love.³⁰

CEL. This is wishing me well in a strange way!³¹ Heaven grant that you may never have occasion . . . But here comes Monsieur Dubois curiously decked out.

SCENE IV.—CÉLIMÈNE, ALCESTE, DUBOIS.

ALC. What means this strange attire, and that frightened look? What ails you?

DU. Sir . . .

³⁰ The words "so that" until "love" are, with some alterations, found also in *Don Garcia of Navarre*, Act i., Scene 3, Vol. I.

³¹ It has been said that Molière has reproduced an incident of his own life, with his wife, out of despair that her love for the Count of Guiche was not returned, threw herself into the arms of the Duke of Lauzun, and that the *liaison* was betrayed to Molière by the Abbé de Richelieu; that when Molière reproached his wife with her conduct, she answered that she was guilty only of thoughtlessness, and begged his pardon: that he forgave her; that for some time they lived happily together; but that, on her return to Paris, she broke out again. For all these and similar stories, there is no other foundation than the well-known pamphlet, *La Fameuse comédienne*. (See Introductory Notice to *The Impromptu of Versailles*, Vol. I. See also Note 85, page 27.)

ALC. Well?

DU. The most mysterious event.

ALC. What is it?

DU. Our affairs are turning out badly, sir.

ALC. What?

DU. Shall I speak out?

ALC. Yes, do, and quickly.

DU. Is there no one there?

ALC. Curse your trifling! Will you speak?

DU. Sir, we must beat a retreat.

ALC. What do you mean?

DU. We must steal away from this quietly.

ALC. And why?

DU. I tell you that we must leave this place.

ALC. The reason?

DU. You must go, sir, without staying to take leave.

ALC. But what is the meaning of this strain?

DU. The meaning is, sir, that you must make yourself scarce.

ALC. I shall knock you on the head to a certainty, booby, if you do not explain yourself more clearly.

DU. A fellow, sir, with a black dress, and as black a look, got as far as the kitchen to leave a paper with us, scribbled over in such a fashion that old Nick himself could not have read it. It is about your law-suit, I make no doubt; but the very devil, I believe, could not make head nor tail of it.

ALC. Well! what then? What has the paper to do with the going away of which you speak, you scoundrel?

DU. I must tell you, sir, that, about an hour afterwards, a gentleman who often calls, came to ask for you quite eagerly, and not finding you at home, quietly told me, knowing how attached I am to you, to let you know . . . Stop a moment, what the deuce is his name?

ALC. Never mind his name, you scoundrel, and tell me what he told you.

DU. He is one of your friends, in short, that is sufficient. He told me that for your very life you must get away from this, and that you are threatened with arrest.

ALC. But how! has he not specified anything?

DU. No. He asked me for ink and paper, and has

sent you a line from which you can, I think, fathom the mystery!

ALC. Hand it over then.

CEL. What can all this mean?

ALC. I do not know; but I am anxious to be informed. Have you almost done, devil take you?

DU. (*After having fumbled for some time for the Note*). After all, sir, I have left it on your table.

ALC. I do not know what keeps me from . . .

CEL. Do not put yourself in a passion, but go and unravel this perplexing business.

ALC. It seems that fate, whatever I may do, has sworn to prevent my having a conversation with you. But, to get the better of her, allow me to see you again, madam, before the end of the day.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—ALCESTE, PHILINTE.

ALC. I tell you, my mind is made up about it.

PHIL. But, whatever this blow may be, does it compel you . . .

ALC. You may talk and argue till doomsday if you like, nothing can avert me from what I have said. The age we live in is too perverse, and I am determined to withdraw altogether from intercourse with the world. What! when honour, probity, decency, and the laws, are all against my adversary; when the equity of my claim is everywhere cried up; when my mind is at rest as to the justice of my cause, I meanwhile see myself betrayed by its issue! What! I have got justice on my side, and I lose my case! A wretch, whose scandalous history is well known, comes off triumphant by the blackest falsehood! All good faith yields to his treachery! He finds the means of being in the right, whilst cutting my throat! The weight of his dissimulation, so full of cunning, overthrows the right and turns the scales of justice! He obtains even a decree of court to crown his villainy. And, not content with the wrong he is doing me, there is abroad in

society an abominable book, of which the very reading is to be condemned, a book that deserves the utmost severity, and of which the scoundrel has the impudence to proclaim me the author.³² Upon this, Oronte is observed to mutter, and tries wickedly to support the imposture! He, who holds an honourable position at Court, to whom I have done nothing except having been sincere and candid, who came to ask me in spite of myself of my opinion of some of his verses; and because I treat him honestly, and will not betray either him or truth, he assists in overwhelming me with a trumped-up crime. Behold him now my greatest enemy! And I shall never obtain his sincere forgiveness, because I did not think that his sonnet was good! Sdeath! to think that mankind is made thus! The thirst for fame induces them to do such things! This is the good faith, the virtuous zeal, the justice and the honour to be found amongst them! Let us begone; it is too much to endure the vexations they are devising; let us get out of this wood, this cut-throat hole; and since men behave towards each other like real wolves, wretches, you shall never see me again as long as I live.

PHIL. I think you are acting somewhat hastily; and the harm done is not so great as you would make it out. Whatever your adversary dares to impute to you has not had the effect of causing you to be arrested. We see his false reports defeating themselves, and this action is likely to hurt him much more than you.

ALC. Him? he does not mind the scandal of such tricks as these. He has a license to be an arrant knave; and this event, far from damaging his position, will obtain him a still better standing to-morrow.

PHIL. In short, it is certain that little notice has been taken of the report which his malice spread against you;³³ from that side you have already nothing to fear; and as for your law-suit, of which you certainly have reason to

³² According to Grimarest, there was at that time secretly in circulation "a terrible book," published under Molière's name. Of course it was said that his opponents, very angry at the *Tartuffe*, were the authors of it: hence the allusion.

³³ These words of Philinte may perhaps vaguely refer to the accusation brought by Montfleury against Molière in 1663. (See Prefatory Memoir, Vol. I.)

complain, it is easy for you to bring the trial on afresh, and against this decision . . .

ALC. No, I shall leave it as it is. Whatever cruel wrong this verdict may inflict, I shall take particular care not to have it set aside. We see too plainly how right is maltreated in it, and I wish it to go down to posterity as a signal proof, as a notorious testimony of the wickedness of the men of our age. It may indeed cost me twenty thousand francs, but at the cost of twenty thousand francs I shall have the right of railing against the iniquity of human nature, and of nourishing an undying hatred of it.

PHIL. But after all . . .

ALC. But after all, your pains are thrown away. What can you, sir, say upon this head? Would you have the assurance to wish, to my face, to excuse the villainy of all that is happening?

PHIL. No, I agree with you in all that you say. Everything goes by intrigue, and by pure influence. It is only trickery which carries the day in our time, and men ought to act differently. But is their want of equity a reason for wishing to withdraw from their society? All human failings give us, in life, the means of exercising our philosophy. It is the best employment for virtue; and if probity reigned everywhere, if all hearts were candid, just, and tractable, most of our virtues would be useless to us, inasmuch as their functions are to bear, without annoyance, the injustice of others in our good cause; and just in the same way as a heart full of virtue . . .

ALC. I know that you are a most fluent speaker, sir; that you always abound in fine arguments; but you are wasting your time, and all your fine speeches. Reason tells me to retire for my own good. I cannot command my tongue sufficiently; I cannot answer for what I might say, and should very probably get myself into a hundred scrapes. Allow me, without any more words, to wait for Célimène. She must consent to the plan that brings me here. I shall see whether her heart has any love for me; and this very hour will prove it to me.

PHIL. Let us go upstairs to Éliante, and wait her coming.

ALC. No, my mind is too harassed. You go and see her, and leave me in this little dark corner with my black care.

PHIL. That is strange company to leave you in; I will induce Éliante to come down.

SCENE II.—CÉLIMÈNE, ORONTE, ALCESTE.

ORON. Yes, madam, it remains for you to consider whether, by ties so dear, you will make me wholly yours, I must be absolutely certain of your affection: a lover dislikes to be held in suspense upon such a subject. If the ardour of my affection has been able to move your feelings, you ought not to hesitate to let me see it; and the proof, after all, which I ask of you, is not to allow Alceste to wait upon you any longer; to sacrifice him to my love, and, in short, to banish him from your house this very day.

CEL. But why are you so incensed against him; you, whom I have so often heard speak of his merits?

ORON. There is no need, madam, of these explanations; the question is, what are your feelings? Please to choose between the one or the other; my resolution depends entirely upon yours.

ALC. (*Coming out of his corner*). Yes, this gentleman is right, madam, you must make a choice; and his request agrees perfectly with mine. I am equally eager, and the same anxiety brings me here. My love requires a sure proof. Things cannot go on any longer in this way, and the moment has arrived for explaining your feelings.

ORON. I have no wish, sir, in any way to disturb, by an untimely affection, your good fortune.

ALC. And I have no wish, sir, jealous or not jealous, to share aught in her heart with you.

ORON. If she prefers your affection to mine . . .

ALC. If she has the slightest inclination towards you . . .

ORON. I swear henceforth not to pretend to it again.

ALC. I peremptorily swear never to see her again.

ORON. Madam, it remains with you now to speak openly.

ALC. Madam, you can explain yourself fearlessly.

ORON. You have simply to tell us where your feelings are engaged.

ALC. You may simply finish the matter, by choosing between us two.

ORON. What! you seem to be at a loss to make such a choice.

ALC. What! your heart still wavers, and appears uncertain!

CEL. Good Heavens, how out of place is this persistence, and how very unreasonable you both show yourselves! It is not that I do not know whom to prefer, nor is it my heart that wavers. It is not at all in doubt between you two; and nothing could be more quickly accomplished than the choice of my affections. But to tell the truth, I feel too confused to pronounce such an avowal before you; I think that disobliging words ought not to be spoken in people's presence; that a heart can give sufficient proof of its attachment without going so far as to break with every one; and gentler intimations suffice to inform a lover of the ill success of his suit.

ORON. No, no, I do not fear a frank avowal; for my part I consent to it.

ALC. And I demand it; it is just its very publicity that I claim, and I do not wish you to spare my feelings in the least. Your great study has always been to keep friends with every one; but no more trifling, no more uncertainty. You must explain yourself clearly, or I shall take your refusal as a verdict; I shall know, for my part, how to interpret your silence, and shall consider it as a confirmation of the worst.

ORON. I owe you many thanks, sir, for this wrath, and I say in every respect as you do.

CEL. How you weary me with such a whim! Is there any justice in what you ask? And have I not told you what motive prevents me? I will be judged by Éliante, who is just coming.

SCENE III.—ÉLIANTE, PHILINTE, CÉLIMÈNE, ORONTE,
ALCESTE.

CEL. Good cousin, I am being persecuted here by people who have concerted to do so. They both demand,

with the same warmth, that I should declare whom my heart has chosen, and that, by a decision which I must give before their very faces, I should forbid one of them to tease me any more with his attentions. Say, has ever such a thing been done?

EL. Pray, do not consult me upon such a matter. You may perhaps address yourself to a wrong person, for I am decidedly for people who speak their mind.

ORON. Madam, it is useless for you to decline.

ALC. All your evasions here will be badly supported.

ORON. You must speak, you must, and no longer waver.

ALC. You need do no more than remain silent.

ORON. I desire but one word to end our discussions.

ALC. To me your silence will convey as much as speech.

SCENE IV.—ARSINOÉ, CÉLIMÈNE, ÉLIANTE, ALCESTE,
PHILINTE, ACASTE, CLITANDRE, ORONTE.

AC. (*To Célimène*). We have both come, by your leave, madam, to clear up a certain little matter with you.

CL. (*To Oronte and Alceste*). Your presence happens fortunately, gentlemen; for this affair concerns you also.

ARS. (*To Célimène*). No doubt you are surprised at seeing me here, madam; but these gentlemen are the cause of my intrusion. They both came to see me, and complained of a proceeding which I could not have credited. I have too high an opinion of your kindness of heart ever to believe you capable of such a crime; my eyes even have refused to give credence to their strongest proofs, and in my friendship, forgetting trivial disagreements, I have been induced to accompany them here, to hear you refute this slander.

AC. Yes, madam, let us see, with composure, how you will manage to bear this out. This letter has been written by you, to Clitandre.

CL. And this tender epistle you have addressed to Acaste.

AC. (*To Oronte and Alceste*). This writing is not altogether unknown to you, gentlemen, and I have no doubt that her kindness has before now made you familiar with

her hand. But this is well worth the trouble of reading.³⁴

"You are a strange man to condemn my liveliness of spirits, and to reproach me that I am never so merry as when I am not with you. Nothing could be more unjust; and if you do not come very soon to ask my pardon for this offence, I shall never forgive you as long as I live. Our great hulking booby of a Viscount."³⁵ He ought to have been here. "Our great hulking booby of a Viscount, with whom you begin your complaints, is a man who would not at all suit me; and ever since I watched him for full three-quarters of an hour spitting in a well to make circles in the water, I never could have a good opinion of him. As for the little Marquis . . ." that is myself, ladies and gentlemen, be it said without the slightest vanity, . . . "As for the little Marquis, who held my hand yesterday for a long while, I think that there is nothing so diminutive as his whole person, and his sole merit consists in his cloak and sword. As to the man with the green shoulder knot."³⁶ (To Alceste). It is your turn now, Sir. "As to the man with the green shoulder knot, he amuses me sometimes with his bluntness and his splenetic behaviour; but there are hundreds of times when I think him the greatest bore in the world. Respecting the man with the big waistcoat . . ."³⁷ (To Oronte). This is your share. "Respecting the man with the big waistcoat, who has thought fit to set up as a wit, and wishes to be an author in spite of every one, I cannot even take the trouble to listen to what he says; and his prose bores me just

³⁴ Acaste reads the letter written to Clitandre; and Clitandre, the one written to Acaste.

³⁵ It has been said that the "great hulking booby of a Viscount" was intended for the Count de Guiche, and that Madame, the wife of Louis XIV.'s brother, whose Chevalier he was, wished the description to be omitted, but that the King told Molière to leave it in. All this appears to be mere gossip, unsupported by anything.

³⁶ On page 191, note 2, we find that Molière, on playing the part of Alceste, wore a dress "ornamented with green ribands;" hence the allusion to "the green shoulder knot."

³⁷ Oronte wore a big waistcoat (*veste*) to distinguish himself from the other personages. But afterwards everyone wore such a waistcoat; and La Grange and Vinot, the editors of the first collected edition of Molière's works, finding that this no longer distinguished Oronte, called him *l'homme au sonnet*, the sonnetteer.

as much as his poetry. Take it then for granted that I do not always enjoy myself so much as you think; and that I wish for you, more than I care to say, amongst all the entertainments to which I am dragged; and that the presence of those we love is an excellent relish to our pleasures."

CL. Now for myself.

"Your Clitandre, whom you mention to me, and who has always such a quantity of soft expressions at his command, is the last man for whom I could feel any affection. He must be crazed in persuading himself that I love him; and you are so too in believing that I do not love you. You had better change your fancies for his, and come and see me as often as you can, to help me in bearing the annoyance of being pestered by him." This shows the model of a lovely character, madam; and I need not tell you what to call it. It is enough. We shall, both of us, show this admirable sketch of your heart everywhere and to everybody.

AC. I might also say something, and the subject is tempting; but I deem you beneath my anger; and I will show you that little marquises can find worthier hearts than yours to console themselves.

SCENE V.—CÉLIMÈNE, ÉLIANTE, ARSINOÉ, ALCESTE, ORONTE, PHILINTE.

ORON. What! Am I to be pulled to pieces in this fashion, after all that you have written to me? And does your heart, with all its semblance of love, plight its faith to all mankind by turns! Bah, I have been too great a dupe, but I shall be so no longer. You have done me a service, in showing yourself in your true colours to me. I am the richer by a heart which you thus restore to me, and find my revenge in your loss. (*To Alceste*). Sir, I shall no longer be an obstacle to your flame, and you may settle matters with this lady as soon as you please.

SCENE VI.—CÉLIMÈNE, ÉLIANTE, ARSINOÉ, ALCESTE, PHILINTE.

ARS. (*To Celimène*). This is certainly one of the basest actions which I have ever seen; I can no longer be silent, and feel quite upset. Has any one ever seen the like of it? I do not concern myself much in the affairs of other

people, but this gentleman (*pointing to Alceste*), who has staked the whole of his happiness on you, an honourable and deserving man like this, and who worshipped you to madness, ought he to have been . . .

AL. Leave me, I pray you, madam, to manage my own affairs ; and do not trouble yourself unnecessarily. In vain do I see you espouse my quarrel. I am unable to repay you for this great zeal ; and if ever I intended to avenge myself by choosing some one else, it would not be you whom I would select.

ARS. And do you imagine, sir, that I ever harboured such a thought, and that I am so very anxious to secure you ? You must be very vain, indeed, to flatter yourself with such an idea. Célimène's leavings are a commodity of which no one needs be so very much enamoured. Pray, undeceive yourself, and do not carry matters with so high a hand. People like me are not for such as you. You will do much better to remain dangling after her skirts, and I long to see so beautiful a match.

SCENE VII.—CÉLIMÈNE, ÉLIANTE, ALCESTE, PHILINTE.

AL. (*To Célimène*). Well ! I have held my tongue, notwithstanding all I have seen, and I have let everyone have his say before me. Have I controlled myself long enough ? and will you now allow me . . .

CEL. Yes, you may say what you like ; you are justified when you complain, and you may reproach me with anything you please. I confess that I am in the wrong ; and overwhelmed by confusion I do not seek by any idle excuse to palliate my fault. The anger of the others I have despised ; but I admit my guilt towards you. No doubt, your resentment is just ; I know how culpable I must appear to you, that every thing speaks of my treachery to you, and that, in short, you have cause to hate me. Do so, I consent to it.

ALC. But can I do so, you traitress ? Can I thus get the better of all my tenderness for you ? And although I wish to hate you with all my soul, shall I find a heart quite ready to obey me. (*To Eliante and Philinte*). You see what an unworthy passion can do, and I call you both as witnesses of my infatuation. Nor, truth to say, is this

all, and you will see me carry it out to the bitter end, to show you that it is wrong to call us wise, and that in all hearts there remains still something of the man. (*To Célimène*). Yes, perfidious creature, I am willing to forget your crimes. I can find, in my own heart, an excuse for all your doings, and hide them under the name of a weakness into which the vices of the age betrayed your youth, provided your heart will second the design which I have formed of avoiding all human creatures, and that you are determined to follow me without delay into the solitude in which I have made a vow to pass my days. It is by that only, that, in every one's opinion, you can repair the harm done by your letters, and that, after the scandal which every noble heart must abhor, it may still be possible for me to love you.

CEL. What! I renounce the world before I grow old, and bury myself in your wilderness!

ALC. If your affection responds to mine what need the rest of the world signify to you? Am I not sufficient for you?

CEL. Solitude is frightful to a widow of twenty.³⁸ I do not feel my mind sufficiently grand and strong to resolve to adopt such a plan. If the gift of my hand can satisfy your wishes, I might be induced to tie such bonds; and marriage . . .

ALC. No. My heart loathes you now, and this refusal alone effects more than all the rest. As you are not disposed, in those sweet ties, to find all in all in me, as I would find all in all in you, begone, I refuse your offer, and this much-felt outrage frees me for ever from your unworthy toils.

SCENE VIII.—ÉLIANTE, ALCESTE, PHILINTE.

ALC. (*To Éliante*). Madam, your beauty is adorned by a hundred virtues; and I never saw anything in you but what was sincere. For a long while I thought very highly

³⁸ It would be against all the traditions of the French stage to let a respectable unmarried young lady be visited by gentlemen; hence Alceste says (Act i., Scene 1, page 199), that "Célimène is a young widow." Arsinoé also would not have given vent to her insinuations (page 222) if this had not been the case.

of you ; but allow me to esteem you thus for ever, and suffer my heart in its various troubles not to offer itself for the honour of your acceptance. I feel too unworthy, and begin to perceive that Heaven did not intend me for the marriage bond ; that the homage of only the remainder of a heart unworthy of you, would be below your merit, and that in short . . .

EL. You may pursue this thought. I am not at all embarrassed with my hand ; and here is your friend, who, without giving me much trouble, might possibly accept it if I asked him.

PHIL. Ah ! Madam, I ask for nothing better than that honour, and I could sacrifice my life and soul for it.

ALC. May you, to taste true contentment, preserve for ever these feelings towards each other ! Deceived on all sides, overwhelmed with injustice, I will fly from an abyss where vice is triumphant, and seek out some small secluded nook on earth, where one may enjoy the freedom of being an honest man.

PHIL. Come, madam, let us leave nothing untried to deter him from the design on which his heart is set.

LE MEDECIN MALGRE LUI.
COMEDIE.

THE PHYSICIAN IN SPITE OF HIMSELF.
A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS.

(THE ORIGINAL IN PROSE.)

AUGUST 6TH, 1666.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

The Physician in spite of Himself was played for the first time on the 6th of August, 1666, according to Molière's nearly invariable rule, by which he always produced a farcical work, which made people laugh, after a serious one, which had caused people to reflect. The plot of this play was not entirely new ; it existed probably in the outline of the Italian *Commedia dell'arte*, and was found among the stories related by the troubadours and *trouvères*. Molière must have often played a remodelling of it in the Provinces. La Grange, in his Register (see Introductory Notices to *The School for Wives criticised*, Vol. I.), speaks of a farce called *Le Fagotier*, of another called *Le Fagoteux*—both words meaning The Fagot-Maker—and of a third called *Le Médecin par force*. But all these small plays appear to refer to one jocular short comedy, which was changed and doctored to suit the tastes of the different provincial audiences. Molière got his chief plan from these, and probably from nothing else. *The Physician in spite of Himself* consists of two different parts, each drawn from a different source. There is, first, the idea of a clodhopper on whom his wife wishes to be avenged, and whom she pretends to be a skilful physician, whose zeal has to be stimulated by the stick : and there is, secondly, the idea of a girl who feigns to be dumb, but who recovers speech again, and abuses it in such a manner that every one wishes her to be speechless.

One of the oldest accounts of the story on which Molière's play is based, but which we are convinced the French dramatist never saw, is the following,—to be found in a Sanscrit collection, *La Couka Saptali*.

"In the town of Pantchapoura lived a king called Satroumardana. His daughter, named Madanarekha, had an abscess in her throat. The doctors applied all kinds of plasters, but without effect, so at last they agreed that there was no remedy for the disease. Then the King proclaimed in every country that he who cured the Princess should be richly rewarded. The wife of a Brahmin who lived in a village, having heard the proclamation, said to the messenger, 'My husband is the most skilful magician and charmer in the world, Take him with you ; he will cure the Princess.' And she said to her husband, 'Pretend to be a magician and a charmer, and go boldly into the town and cure the Princess. You won't waste your time.' The Brahmin went to the palace and to the Princess, sprinkled her with water, blew at her, and imitated the charmers, muttering the

while between his teeth. Suddenly he cried out at the top of his voice, and uttered a farrago of the most absurd words he could think of. On hearing all these strange utterances, the Princess was taken with such a fit of laughter, that the abscess broke and she was cured. The King, transported with joy, overloaded the Brahmin with presents."

It is, however possible that Molière may have seen Olearius' *Scientific Journey to Moscow and Persia*, which history was translated into French as early as the year 1656 by the celebrated Wickefort.

The account to be found there is as follows: "The Grand Duke Boris Gudenow, who reigned during the years 1597 and 1605, was according to the relation of Olearius, very much afflicted with the gout. At a certain period, when he suffered very severe pains, he caused it publicly to be proclaimed at Moscow, that he would reward with extraordinary favour and great riches, the man, whoever he might be, that would relieve him from those pains. It seems that no one voluntarily appeared to earn the favour of the Grand Duke: and, indeed, no wonder, for a doctor had his whole existence at stake in those times in Russia if his cure failed, upon some high or noble patient; and Gudenow was in the habit of making the surgeon, as if he considered the latter as absolute master of nature, responsible for the result of his art.

"The wife of a certain bojaar, or councillor of the cabinet, who received very harsh treatment from her husband, took the advantage of this public edict of the Grand Duke to revenge herself, in a cunning manner, on her cruel husband. She therefore had the Duke informed that her husband possessed an infallible remedy for the gout, but that he was not sufficiently humane to impart it.

"The bojaar was immediately sent for to court, and strictly examined. The latter declared, by all that was holy, that he was unacquainted with any such remedy, and had not the slightest knowledge of medicine. But oaths would not avail him; Gudenow had him severely whipped and confined. When, shortly after, he was again examined, he repeated the same declarations, adding that this trick was probably played upon him by his wife; the Duke had him whipped a second time, but more severely, and threatened him with death if he did not speedily relieve him from pain. Seized with terror, the bojaar was now entirely at a loss what to be at. He promised to do his best, but requested a few days in order to have the necessary drugs gathered. Having with great difficulty, had his request granted, he sent to Ozirbalt, two days' journey from Moscow, in order to get thence all sorts of drugs which were to be had there. He sent for a cartload of them, mixed them all together, and prepared therewith a bath for the Duke, in the hope of his blind cure proving successful. Gudenow, after having used the bath, really found some relief, and the bojaar had his life spared him. Nevertheless, because he had known such an art, denied his knowledge of it, and refused his assistance to the Grand Duke, the latter had him again thoroughly whipt, and after being entirely recovered, he gave him a new dress, two hundred rubles, and eighteen slaves, by way of a present. In addition to this, he seriously admonished the doctor never to be revenged on his wife. It is said that the bojaar, after this occurrence, lived many years in peace and happiness with his spouse."

The idea of a woman avenging herself on her husband, by pretending that he is a doctor, and must be compelled to exercise his art, is found in many ancient *fabliaux*; above all, in one of the twelfth century, *Le vilain Mire*, the rustic physician, which is nearly the same story as that told by

Olearius, except that it is the king's daughter who has a fish-bone sticking in her throat, which prevents her eating and drinking. The rustic's wife, who is the daughter of a poor knight, and whom her husband has maltreated, revenges herself in the same way as the bojaar's spouse, but the cure is different; the rustic scratches himself in all kinds of ridiculous attitudes, so that the royal maiden laughs to such a degree that the fish-bone flies out. The ending is also different. The king, delighted that his daughter has been cured, sends for a great many sick people, and orders the physician to restore them to health. He refuses, and is beaten; whereupon he commands a great fire to be kindled in the large hall, tells all his patients that he has an infallible remedy, and that he is going to put the most seriously ill of them into the fire, to give his ashes to the others to drink, and that then they shall be cured. It is needless to say that all immediately recover their health in a great measure.

Rabelais, in the twenty-fourth chapter of the third book of *Pantagruel*, relates that he and some of his friends acted in his youth "the moral comedy of him who had espoused and married a dumb wife. . . . The good honest man, her husband, was very earnestly urgent to have the fillet of her tongue untied, and would needs have her speak by any means. At his desire, some pains were taken on her, and partly by the industry of the physician, other part by the expertness of the surgeon, the ency-liglotte which she had under her tongue being cut, she spoke, and spoke again; yea, within a few hours she spoke so loud, so much, so fiercely, and so long, that her poor husband returned to the same physician for a receipt to make her hold her peace. There are, quoth the physician, many proper remedies in our art to make dumb women speak, but there are none that ever I could learn therein to make them silent. The only cure which I have found out is their husband's deafness. The wretch became within a few weeks thereafter, by virtue of some drugs, charms, or enchantments, which the physician had prescribed unto him, so deaf, that he could not have heard the thundering of nineteen hundred cannons at a salvo. His wife, perceiving that indeed he was as deaf as a door nail, and that her scolding was but in vain, sith that he heard her not, she grew stark mad. Some time after the doctor asked for his fee of the husband; who answered, That truly he was deaf, and so was not able to understand what the tenour of his demand might be. Whereupon the leech bedusted him with a little, I know not what, sort of powder; which rendered him a fool immediately, so great was the stultifying virtue of that strange kind of pulverized dose. Then did this fool of a husband, and his mad wife, join together, and falling on the doctor and the surgeon, did so scratch, bethwack, and bang them, that they were left half dead upon the place, so furious were the blows which they received. I never in my lifetime laughed so much, as at the acting of that buffoonery."

Ménage and Brossette mention that Molière intended Sganarelle for a certain wig-maker of his time, Didier l'Amour, whose shop was under the stairs of la Sainte Chapelle, whose first wife was very violent, like Martine, and to whom Boileau, later on, gave a place in the *Lutrin*. It really seems that Sganarelles may be found in every country,—men who, with a certain amount of natural mother-wit, and a few sesquipedalian words, acquired heaven knows where, are the heroes of the bar-parlour, and the admired of all admirers among their boon-companions. Such men may possibly love their wives, but they box their ears; they may have a certain feeling for their children, but, instead of giving them bread, they squander their scanty wages, lazily gained, in the public-house, caring

neither for the day nor the morrow, never thinking of the future or the past, and deserving, in one word, the reputation of "real good fellows."

It has been well said by Boileau, that "in the smallest farces of Molière, there are some admirable touches that may vainly be sought in the finest pieces of other comic authors." *The Physician in spite of Himself* is a proof of this. It is written in a most unbounded spirit of mirth, the matrimonial breezes wafting a certain amount of refreshing coolness through it all. The way in which Sganarelle is dubbed, or rather drubbed a doctor, is highly amusing; and the cure of the dumb girl, and the use which she makes of her recovered speech, contains a philosophical lesson which may be sometimes applied to the way in which *nouveaux riches* spread their newly acquired wealth. The learned and anatomical disquisitions between Sganarelle and GÉRONTE are also very entertaining, as well as the growth of greed in the rustic physician.

In the second volume of the Select Comedies of M. de Molière, London, 1732, *The Physician in Spite of Himself* is dedicated to Dr. Mead, under the title of *Doctor and no Doctor*, in the following words:

SIR,—MOLIÈRE having sent most of his Performances Patronless into the World, his Translators have determined to supply this his only Defect by prefixing some favourite Name to each of 'em, in order to recommend 'em the more powerfully to the perusal of their Countrymen. None can have a stronger Influence in this respect than that of Dr. Mead, for if we have but as many Readers as owe to him being in a Capacity of reading at all, our Bookseller will have no cause to repent of his undertaking.—It may, by some, be here expected, that I should apologize for my Author, as having in this and several other of his Comedies treated Medicine and its Professors with a severe kind of Freedom; but this, Sir, to one of Your Discernment and Politeness would be highly impertinent.

As 'twas perverted Medicine, alope, and its quack Professors that were the subjects of his Ridicule, Dr. Mead can be no more affected by it than a true Prophet by the Punishment of Imposture, nor be displeas'd with a Satire he could not fear.

You are too well acquainted, Sir, with the universal History of Physick, to be ignorant of the State of it at Paris in Molière's time, or the Characters of their Physicians. All they employed themselves about, was searching after visionary Specificks, and trying of chemical Tricks; the Cause of a Disease was never enquir'd into, nor the Symptoms of it regarded, but hypothetical Jargon and random Prescription serv'd in the room. This made Medicine become a Pest, instead of a Remedy, on which account you'll readily acknowledge that the Chastisement was just. On the contrary, Sir, Your Practice was founded on the Rock of sound Learning, and Your Success secur'd by an extensive and well-mark'd Experience; by which means You have established the Honour of the Profession, are become a general Blessing to the Society You belong to, and have been capable, as a good Physician, of doing more Service in Your Generation than all the bad ones have done Mischief.

It will be thought, I know, by the World, that when I'm speaking of Dr. Mead, I should not only celebrate him as an excellent Physician, but as an excellent Man likewise, and an accomplish'd Gentleman; but these Characters are necessary to and included in the other. To be a good Physician, a Man must possess all the Virtues of Humanity and Politeness, he must be Eyes to the blind, Feet to the lame, and Health and Refreshment to the sick and needy; he must be a fine Scholar by Education, and a fine Gentleman by being obliged to converse with the best Company: In all these respects, therefore, You are certainly as eminent, Sir, as You are in Your Profession.

THAT Heaven may prolong Your Life for the Benefit of Your Fellow-creatures, as long as Life can be a Good, and that at last, when you must quit this mortal Coil, You may do it with that Ease, which You have so often procur'd for others in those critical Moments, is the sincere Prayer of all that ever heard of Your Name, but of none more sincerely than of,—SIR, Your most obedient humble Servant,

THE TRANSLATOR.

The Physician in Spite of Himself has been often imitated by English

dramatists; first by Lacy in *The Dumb Lady*; or *the Farrier made a Physician*, a farce in five acts, acted about 1672, and in which the adapter played probably "Drench, the farrier." The main plot is taken from Molière's play, and the catastrophe from *Love is the best Doctor* (see Introductory Notice to *Love is the best Doctor*).

Another partial adaptation of Molière's play is by Mrs. Centlivre, who, in *Love's Contrivance*, acted in 1703 at Drury Lane, imitated several of the French author's comedies (see Introductory Notice to *The Forced Marriage*, Vol. I).

Henry Fielding has also nearly literally followed Molière's play, and has added some songs, in a "ballad farce," called *The Mock Doctor*; or *the Dumb Lady Cured*, acted at Drury Lane in 1732. This piece was, and has remained, a great favourite on the English stage.

Another imitation of Molière's *Physician in Spite of Himself*, or rather a remodelling of Fielding's translation, is George Wood's *The Irish Doctor*; or *the Dumb Lady cured*, first performed at the Queen's Theatre, November 19th, 1844. It is Fielding's *Mock Doctor*, with all the spirit evaporated. Sganarelle becomes an Irish broom-maker, Dennis Murphy, and Géronte, Sir Ralph Credulous.

The "high-born and most hopeful prince," to whom Lacy inscribed his play, was the eldest of the three natural sons of Charles II. by Barbara Villiers, wife of Roger Palmer, Earl of Castlemaine, better known as Duchess of Cleveland, a dignity conferred by her royal keeper in testimony of the high opinion he entertained of her "personal" virtues,¹—at least so runs the preamble of the patent of creation.

At the date of the play, the hopeful prince enjoyed the title of Earl of Southampton, "as," says Collins, the Peerage writer, "heir of his mother, the Duchess of Cleveland," that being her second title. Upon the 1st of April 1673, he was installed a Knight of the Garter, and upon the 10th of September 1675 was created Duke of Southampton, Earl of Chichester, and Baron of Newberry, with remainder to the heirs-male of his body, whom failing, to his younger brother George, Duke of Northumberland, Upon the death of his mother, at her house of Chiswick, in the county of Middlesex, on the 9th October 1709, the title of Cleveland, under the limitations in the patent, devolved on her eldest son Charles. His Grace married, when eighteen, Mary, heiress of Sir Henry Wood, the elder brother of Thomas, Bishop of Litchfield and Coventry. The Duchess died in 1680, and was buried in Westminster Abbey. By her he had no issue. This lady seems to have brought him a very handsome fortune, as in Michaelmas term 1685 he had a decree in Chancery against the Bishop for £30,000, "as part of his lady's fortune."

In 1694, the Duke took to wife Anne, daughter of Sir William Pulteny of Misterton, in the county of Leicester, by whom he had three sons and three daughters. He died on the 9th September 1730, and was succeeded by his eldest son William, who died without issue in 1774, so that the titles of Cleveland and Southampton became extinct, and remained so for more than half a century, when the Dukedom of Cleveland was revived in the person of the Earl of Darlington, the heir of line of Lady Grace Fitzroy, the second daughter of Duke Charles, who married Henry Vane, son of Lord Barnard. Her eldest sister Barbara died unmarried; and her younger sister, Lady Anne, who married John Paddey, Esq., departed this life at Waterford, Herts, on the 23d of January 1769.

¹ Collins' *Peerage*, vol. i., p. 56. London, 1741. 8vo. See also Introductory Notice to *The Princess of Elis*, and Introductory Notice to *Love is the best Doctor*.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

GÉRONTE, *father to Lucinde.*

LÉANDRE, *Lucinde's lover.*

SGANARELLE, *husband to Martine.*²

M. ROBERT, *Sganarelle's neighbour.*

LUCAS, *husband to Jacqueline.*

VALÈRE, *Géronte's servant.*³

THIBAUT,
PERRIN, *his son,* } *peasants,*

LUCINDE, *Géronte's daughter.*

MARTINE, *Sganarelle's wife.*

JACQUELINE, *nurse at Géronte's, and Lucas' wife.*

² This part was played by Molière himself. In the inventory of his dresses, given by M. E. Soulié, and taken after his death, we find, "The clothes for the representation of *The Physician in spite of Himself*, consisting of a doublet, breeches, collar, girdle, ruff, woollen stockings, and pouch, all of yellow serge, trimmed with green *radon* ;* a satin dress with breeches of short nap, flowered velvet."

³ The original has *domestique*, which in the seventeenth century meant a steward, a secretary, a trustworthy man.

* I have not been able to find this word in any dictionary.



THE MISANTHROPE.

ALC. In short, whatever people may say or do, you always find reasons to bear with every one; and your very careful judgment . . .

SCENE IV.—ALCESTE, CÉLIMÈNE, BASQUE.

BAS. Clitandre is here too, madam.

ALC. Exactly so. (*Wishes to go*).

CEL. Where are you running to?

ALC. I am going.

CEL. Stay.

ALC. For what?

CEL. Stay.

ALC. I cannot.

CEL. I wish it.

ALC. I will not. These conversations only weary me; and it is too bad of you to wish me to endure them.

CEL. I wish it, I wish it.

ALC. No, it is impossible.

CEL. Very well, then! go, begone; you can do as you like.

SCENE V.—ÉLIANTE, PHILINTE, ACASTE, CLITANDRE,
ALCESTE, CÉLIMÈNE, BASQUE.

EL. (*To Célimène*). Here are the two marquises coming up with us. Has anyone told you?

CEL. Yes. (*To Basque*). Place chairs for everyone. (*Basque places chairs, and exit*). (*To Alceste*). You are not gone?

ALC. No; but I am determined, madam, to have you make up your mind either for them or for me.

CEL. Hold your tongue.

ALC. This very day you shall explain yourself.

CEL. You are losing your senses.

ALC. Not at all. You shall declare yourself.

CEL. Indeed!

ALC. You must take your stand.

CEL. You are jesting, I believe.

ALC. Not so. But you must choose. I have been too patient.¹¹

¹¹ Whilst this "aside" is going on between Alceste and Célimène, all the other persons have taken seats on the stage in a semi-circle, facing the

CL. Egad! I have just come from the Louvre, where Cléonte, at the levee, made himself very ridiculous. Has he not some friend who could charitably enlighten him upon his manners?

CEL. Truth to say, he compromises himself very much in society; everywhere he carries himself with an air that is noticed at first sight, and when after a short absence you meet him again, he is still more absurd than ever.

AC. Egad! Talk of absurd people, just now, one of the most tedious ones has annoyed me. That reasoner, Damon, kept me, if you please, for a full hour in the broiling sun, away from my Sedan chair.¹²

CEL. He is a strange talker, and one who always finds the means of telling you nothing with a great flow of words. There is no sense at all in his tittle-tattle, and all that we hear is but noise.

EL. (*To Philinte*). This beginning is not bad; and the conversation takes a sufficiently agreeable turn against our neighbours.

CL. Timante, too, Madam, is another original.

CEL. He is a complete mystery from top to toe, who throws upon you, in passing, a bewildered glance, and who, without having anything to do, is always busy. Whatever he utters is accompanied with grimaces; he quite oppresses people by his ceremonies. To interrupt a conversation, he has always a secret to whisper to you, and that secret turns out to be nothing. Of the merest molehill he makes a mountain, and whispers everything in your ear, even to a "good-day."

spectators. After they have been thus settled, Clitandre begins the conversation; Alceste has a chair on the extreme right, rather at the background.

¹² It is odd that English authorities pretend that Sedan chairs were introduced from France. D'Israëli, in his *Curiosities of Literature*, states that the Duke of Buckingham introduced Sedan chairs into England; Hone, in *The Every-Day Book*, vol. ii., p. 902, says in a note; "Sedan chairs were first introduced into England in 1634. The first was used by the Duke of Buckingham, to the indignation of the people, who exclaimed, that he was employing his fellow-creatures to do the services of beasts." According to a note of M. E. Despois in the *Précieuses Ridicules*, it was the Marquis de Montbrun who first introduced the covered Sedan chairs from England into France.

religion, but in a style so natural, with proofs so clear, with warmth so genuine, that he interests women, and is listened to by men of the world. He knows man, and reasons about him, but in such brief sentences, such living delineations, such pungent humour, that his philosophy is the best of entertainments. He is faithful to his ruined mistress, his calumniated friend, but gracefully, without fuss. All his actions, even noble ones, have an easy way about them which adorns them; he does nothing without pleasantness. His great talent is knowledge of the world; he shows it not only in the trivial circumstances of every-day life, but in the most passionate scenes, the most embarrassing positions. A noble swordsman wants to take Philinte, the 'respectable man,' as his second in a duel; he reflects a moment, excuses himself in a score of phrases, and, 'without playing the Hector,' leaves the bystanders convinced that he is no coward. Armande insults him, then throws herself in his arms; he politely averts the storm, declines the reconciliation with the most loyal frankness, and without employing a single falsehood, leaves the spectators convinced that he is no boor. When he loves Eliante, who prefers Alceste, and whom Alceste may possibly marry, he proposes to her with a complete delicacy and dignity, without lowering himself, without recrimination, without wronging himself or his friend. When Oronte reads him a sonnet, he does not assume in the fop a nature which he has not, but praises the conventional verses in conventional language, and is not so clumsy as to display a poetical judgment which would be out of place. He takes at once his tone from the circumstances; he perceives instantly what he must say and what be silent about, in what degree and what gradations, what exact expedient will reconcile truth and conventional propriety, how far he ought to go or where to take his stand, what faint line separates decorum from flattery, truth from awkwardness. On this narrow path he proceeds free from embarrassment or mistakes, never put out of his way by the shocks or changes of circumstances, never allowing the calm smile of politeness to quit his lips, never omitting to receive with a laugh of good humour the nonsense of his neighbour. This cleverness, entirely French, reconciles in him fundamental honesty and worldly breeding; without it, he would be altogether on the one side or the other. In this way comedy finds its hero half way between the *roué* and the preacher.'

Thus far M. Taine. His definition of the respectable man *l'honnête homme*, does not, in my opinion, apply to Philinte, but is quite necessary in the present age, when *honnête homme* means no longer a well-born man and gentleman, as well as an honest man; hence Alceste says rightly to Oronte, in the second scene of the first act of *The Misanthrope*, "do not . . . forfeit the reputation you enjoy at court of being a man of sense and a gentleman (*honnête homme*), to take from the hands of a greedy printer that of a ridiculous and wretched author." In the beginning of the seventeenth century, a certain Mons. Nicholas Faret, first secretary of the count of Harcourt,—and who has gone down to posterity as an inveterate drinker, because his friend Saint-Amant made his name rhyme with *cabaret*, a public house,—wrote a book, which was then in everybody's hand, called *L'Honnête homme ou l'Art de plaire à la Cour*. This book, a sort of "Handbook of Politeness," was first published in 1630, but several editions had been printed since that time, and it was still the fashionable guide-book of manners in 1666. It is probable that Molière got inspired by a description given by Faret of *l'honnête homme*, when in love, which had been copied from Lucretius, and that our author then referred to the original Latin author, whose fourth canto of *De Natura*

Rerum he utilizes for Eliante's description of the power of self-deception in love, in the fifth scene of the second act. Molière has also borrowed some lines from Lucretius, for the speech of the Master of Philosophy in the sixth scene of the second act of *The Citizen who Apes the Gentleman* (see Vol. III.). But thence to conclude that Molière had translated Lucretius, which translation has been lost to posterity, is going rather too far. The only biographer of Molière who mentions this is Grimarest (1659-1713), who is far from trustworthy, and who may have supposed that a whole translation of Lucretius existed, when only a few lines had been transposed.

It has been said that Molière, at the time he wrote *The Misanthrope*, endured the pangs of jealousy, and that he was shamefully betrayed by his wife, but could not resist loving her. It seems more than likely that, in Alceste's admiration for the spoiled beauty, Molière gave vent to his own feelings of mixed jealousy and admiration of his wife, and that our author's attempt to depict the hero of this play trying to free himself from the toils of feminine and personal charms, is only heightened in intensity and force by an impulse from within. Still, although we admit that these anecdotes about a great man may sometimes give the complexion of the times—as, for example, the story told about Shakespeare and Burbage—they are not seldom the mere groundless gossip of his professional friends and foes, the rakings of the tap-rooms frequented by the hangers-on of the great man, and even, now and then the venomous utterings of the hero's enemies. This appears to have been the case with the accusations brought against Molière's wife, which are chiefly based on a libellous pamphlet, published nominally at Frankfort, but in reality in Holland, fifteen years after our author's death, and called: *La Fameuse comédienne, ou Histoire de la Guérin, auparavant femme et veuve de Molière*, and which, in my opinion, deserve not the smallest amount of credit. (See Vol. I., Introductory Notice to *The Impromptu of Versailles*.) There can be no doubt that Molière was jealous. This cannot be wondered at, when we find that he was about twenty years older than his wife, who appears to have been rather a coquette, with a great amount of levity, very fond of admiration, and nearly always moving about amidst a retinue of young and elegant courtiers, crowding round the favourite actress of the day to pay her homage. It is more than probable that Molière wrote the greater part of *The Misanthrope* during a season of illness and convalescence, and therefore the bitterness of his feelings must have increased a hundredfold when he found himself alone in his sick-room, and his youthful spouse gadding about with the gaudy and sprightly noblemen. But this is really all that can be said, with any certainty, against Molière's wife.

It has also been stated that Molière attacked and satirized several noblemen in *The Misanthrope*, and took literary vengeance upon some of the supposed admirers of his wife, such as the Count de Guiche, the Abbé de Richelieu, and the Duke de Lauzun, whom he is said to have drawn in this play; as well as the Count de Saint Gilles in Timante; Madame de Longueville, or some other great lady—according to some even Madame Molière—in Célimène; the Duke de Saint-Aignan, in Oronte; Molière's friend Chapelle, in Philinte; Mademoiselle Debré in Eliante. Besides this, characters were found in real life for the prudish and slander-ing Arsinoé, the ridiculous Cléonte, the reasoning Damon, the tiresome story-teller Géralde, the poor silly woman Bélise, the conceited Adraste, the foolish Cléon, the would-be witty Damis, and even "the great hulking booby of a viscount." This, like many other statements about our

author's presumed personal attacks, may be probable, but has really never been proved. There is no doubt that personalities were then in fashion, and that Molière often used, and even sometimes abused, his powerful pen to describe, and to satirize, his rivals and his enemies. But as Urania says in *The School for Wives criticised* (See Vol. I., Scene 7), "Let us not apply to ourselves the points of general censure; let us profit by the lesson, if possible, without assuming that we are spoken against. All the ridiculous delineations which are drawn on the stage, should be looked on by every one without annoyance. They are public mirrors, in which we must never pretend to see ourselves. To bruit it about that we are offended at being hit, is to state openly that we are at fault."

Tradition also states that Molière intended Alceste as a portrait of the virtuous Charles de Ste.-Maure, Duke de Montausier, and that some of our author's enemies induced this nobleman to go and see *The Misanthrope*. but that, instead of being offended at Molière's sketch, he took it as a compliment, and said that he should be delighted to resemble such an honest man as Alceste.

An attempt has been made to draw a parallel between Molière's *Misanthrope* and Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*. Though the nature of their subject may appear at the first glance, similar, nothing could be more opposite than these two personages. Timon becomes a misanthrope through sentiment and experience, for he has been shamefully abandoned by his pseudo-friends when in poverty, and hence his savage onslaughts on society: but Alceste was born splenetic. The one is continually showering gifts and favours around him, even on the most worthless objects, whilst the other would only have assisted a man if he were thoroughly honest and respectable. The character of Apemantus is, if anything, much more like Alceste's than that of the Athenian lord himself. Shakespeare's work points a moral at ingratitude and indiscriminate benevolence and its rewards: Molière's is a satire against spleen. Alceste is a well-born, honourable, and wealthy man, who rails against society, with which he is angry, through an innate and exaggerated sentiment of honour; and although he is nearly always right in principle and theory, he is nearly always wrong in practice and form. He is unbendingly strict in the most trifling, as well as in the gravest, matters. He is sincere and earnest, but blunt and passionate; and it is through this very passion that he is betrayed into an exaggeration, and a quarrelsomeness which render him ridiculous and amusing. His is a sort of finikin fastidiousness which is entirely absent in Timon. In fact, Shakespeare works with a Nasmyth's steam hammer to demolish the vices, while Molière, with due regard for the spirit of his age, and especially that of the King, uses an ordinary mallet, with which he does nearly as much execution as the Englishman, without exerting himself so powerfully.

It is doubtful if Molière would have been allowed the same latitude by Louis XIV., as Shakespeare was by Elizabeth, who never took the slightest notice of his attacks upon her father, Henry VIII. It may be safely asserted that the *Grand Monarque* was not averse to hear serious reasoning railed at and ridiculed, but that he would soon have interfered had the prominent vices of the court been attacked too strongly. Philinte, the worldling, is but a strong reproduction of Ariste in *The School for Husbands*, and of Chrysalde in *The School for Wives*. That he has his reward at the end of the play—if it be a reward—by being made happy with the hand of Éliante, while the Misanthrope is left out in the cold, may be taken as a concession of Molière's to the prevailing feeling at the court,

which was more likely to sympathize with Philinte, their representative, than to grieve over the sorrow of Alceste, their antagonist. It must, however, be admitted that the only show of criticism which Molière displayed against the person of the King, is to be found in this play, because our author, in attacking the men who filled public offices, reflects on the Monarch who appointed them.

Metaphysically considered, Alceste is not unlike Hamlet. Neither of them is fit to live in this world. Both feel they are powerless in changing the decrees of fate: but the causes which have produced that inability differ. In Alceste, it is a brusque candour, swooping unexpectedly down upon meretricious society; but Hamlet has "that within which passeth show," "the time is out of joint," and the will is puzzled by thinking of "the undiscover'd country, from whose borne no traveller returns."

The Misanthrope has been attacked and defended by so many eminent men, that we cannot do better than to give a short *résumé* of some of their opinions, and let the reader himself draw his own conclusions. Let us begin with those who attack him. First we have the celebrated morose philosopher, Jean Jacques Rousseau. If it be true that "a fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind," Rousseau must have felt some sympathy for the tetchy, irritable, well-meaning Alceste. In a letter to d'Alembert, he advances the following objections to Molière's play: "Alceste is a sincere, estimable, honest man, and the author makes him simply ridiculous. This alone would be without excuse. Moreover, Alceste is not a man-hater or Misanthrope, as the title of the piece implies, for in that case none of the audience would like to meet such a man, as the hero of the play, for whom they feel, at the bottom of their heart, a certain respect. The virtuous man is made ridiculous and is opposed to Philinte one of those honest and fashionable men whose maxims are very much like those of a scoundrel; one of those gentle and even-tempered optimists who are satisfied with everybody and everything; who never imagine anybody can be hungry, so long as they can sit down at a well furnished table; who cannot understand people to be poor, because they have money in their pockets, and who, from their well-protected house, would see the whole of mankind robbed, pillaged, slaughtered, and even murdered, without being moved in the least. Molière was wrong in having sketched the Misanthrope as a man who gets angry about trifles; Alceste knows mankind, and ought therefore not to be astonished or enraged at anything they can do, neither at the treachery of a perfidious coquette, nor at the neglect of false friends; hence Molière has not well understood the character of the Misanthrope, and has made him ridiculous in order to please the public."

Fénelon, in his *Lettre sur l'Éloquence*, also attacks Molière, because he says he "has a . . . fault, which many clever people forgive in him, but which I do not, namely, that he has made vice graceful, and virtue severely ridiculous and odious. I can understand that his champions will bring forward that he has treated real honesty in an honourable manner, that he has only attacked splenetic virtue and detestable hypocrisy: but, without entering into any long discussions, I maintain that Plato, and the other legislators of Pagan antiquity, would never have admitted in their republics such a play about morals."

Augustus William Schlegel, in his *Course of Lectures* (XXI.) on *Dramatic Art and Literature*, says—"In *The Misanthrope* . . . the action which is also poorly invented, is found to drag heavily; for, with the exception of a few scenes of a more sprightly description, it consists alto-

gether of discourses formally introduced and supported, while the stagnation is only partially concealed by the art employed on the details of versification and expression. In a word, these pieces are too didactic, too expressly instructive; whereas, in comedy, the spectator should only be instructed incidentally, and, as it were, without its appearing to have been intended. . . . As is well known *The Misanthrope* was at first very coldly received, because it was even less amusing than *The School for Wives* and *The Blue-Stockings*, the action is less rapid, or rather there is none at all; and there is a great want of coherence between the meagre incidents which give only an apparent life to the dramatic movement,—the quarrel with Oronte respecting the sonnet, and its adjustment; the decision of the law-suit, which is ever being brought forward; the unmasking of Célimène, through the vanity of the two Marquises, and the jealousy of Arsinoé. Besides all this, the general plot is not even probable. It is framed with a view to exhibit the thorough delineation of a character; but a character discloses itself much more in its relations with others than immediately. How comes Alceste to have chosen Philinte for a friend a man whose principles were directly the reverse of his own? How comes he also to be enamoured of a coquette, who has nothing amiable in her character, and who entertains us merely by her scandal? We might well say of this Célimène, without exaggeration, that there is not one good point in her whole composition. In a character like that of Alceste, love is not a fleeting sensual impulse, but a serious feeling arising from a want of a sincere mental union. His dislike of flattery, falsehood, and malicious scandal, which always characterize the conversation of Célimène, breaks forth so incessantly, that we feel the first moment he heard her open her lips, ought to have driven him for ever from her society. Finally the subject is ambiguous, and that is its greatest fault. The limits within which Alceste is in the right, and beyond which he is in the wrong, it would be no easy matter to fix, and I am afraid the poet himself did not here see very clearly what he would be at. Philinte, however, with his illusory justification of the way of the world and his phlegmatic resignation, he paints throughout as the intelligent and amiable man. As against the elegant Célimène, Alceste is most decidedly in the right, and only in the wrong in the inconceivable weakness of his conduct towards her. He is in the right in his complaints of the corruption of the social constitution; the facts, at least, which he adduces, are disputed by nobody. He is in the wrong, however, in delivering his sentiments with so much violence, and at an unseasonable time; but as he cannot prevail upon himself to assume the dissimulation which is necessary to be well received in the world, he is perfectly in the right in preferring solitude to society.”

The defenders of Molière's views are numerous. We shall take the oldest of his champions first, viz.: Donneau de Visé, a former enemy, who had attacked *The School for Wives* in his *Zélinde*, but who had seen his mistake, most probably because a play of his, *La Mère Coquette*, had been performed on the 5th of October of the year before, at the theatre of the Palais-Royal. He wrote a letter in defence of the piece, which was printed with the original edition, and has always since been published with it. He therein says, “Before we go to the foundation of the comedy, it is proper to see what was the author's aim.” “That the author's design being to please, and the comedy having pleased, the critics cannot say he has done ill. . . . It was not his intention to write a comedy full of incidents, but only a play wherein he might speak against the manners of the age;” hence he chose a *Misanthrope* for his hero, whose “in-

firmity sets off his friend's (Philinte) wisdom." He further says, that the choice of Célimène, a woman given to slander, and of a man who hates mankind, as mouthpieces for railing at the manners of the age, is very ingenious; for what the hero may forget the coquette will add; praises the skilful opening of the piece, the scene between Oronte and Alceste, and adds, "the sonnet is not bad according to the manner of writing now-a-days; and those who love what we men call points or conclusions, rather than good sense, will certainly like it. Nay, I saw some, at the first representation of this piece, who exposed their own character to the ridicule of this scene, whilst it was being acted, for they cried out that the sonnet was good, until the Misanthrope had criticised it, and then they were all confounded." De Visé praises also the way in which Molière delineates the power of love, as seen in Alceste; speaks highly of the scene between Célimène and Arsinoé, and the "vigour with which the character of the hero is maintained," without being made ridiculous; considers that the part of Philinte is reasonable, and that every one ought to imitate him, and finishes thus: "In this comedy backbiting coquettes, after the example of Célimène, seeing that they cannot avoid encounters that will make them contemptible, ought to learn not to rail at their best friends behind their backs. False prudes ought to learn, that their grimaces are of no use; and that though they were indeed as sage as they would be thought, they would nevertheless be blamed so long as they set up for prudes. I say nothing of the Marquises; I think them the most incorrigible of all; and there are so many things in them still to be found fault with, that everybody owns they may yet for a long time afford matter for ridicule, though they themselves are far from allowing this to be true.

Voltaire, though calling *The Misanthrope* Molière's masterpiece, pretends that the intrigue hangs fire now and then; that the conversation is sparkling, but not always necessary to the action; and finally, that the ending, though well managed, leaves the spectator indifferent, for he does not care whether the Misanthrope marries the coquette or not.

Chamfort, in his *Eloge de Molière*, says:—"If ever any comic author has proved that he understood the system of society, it is Molière in *The Misanthrope*. There, whilst showing its abuses, he teaches at what cost a wise man should obtain the advantages which it grants; that, in a system of union based upon mutual indulgence, perfect virtue is out of place amongst men, and torments itself without correcting them. It is a gold which needs alloy to become firm and be of much use to society; but, at the same time, the author shows, by the constant superiority of Alceste over all the other personages, that virtue, in spite of the ridicule caused by his austerity, eclipses all that surrounds it; and that, though gold has been alloyed, it is yet the costliest of metals."

La Harpe, in his *Cours de Littérature*,—a work formerly too much lauded, and at present too much neglected,—defends Molière against Rousseau; says that the dramatist does not ridicule Alceste's honesty and sincerity, but the excess of those qualities, and that every exaggeration belongs to the domain of comedy; that whenever Alceste attacks slander, nobody feels inclined to laugh, but that when he states that he should like to lose his lawsuit, for the fun of the thing, everybody laughs at him, and justly so. Sincerity is a good thing, but it does not give a man the right to become ridiculous with impunity; hence Molière has done rightly in even attempting to teach honesty not to exceed the ordinary limits of moderation. Rousseau himself admits that "people feel at the bottom of their heart a certain respect" for Alceste, though he professes faults,

at which they justly laugh. The accusation that Molière has not understood the character of a Misanthrope, because the latter does not always rage against public vices, and feels the sting of personal offences, is unjust, because man remains always a man. The accusation that Molière sacrificed everything to the necessity of making the pit laugh is unjust, because he attacked only what was laughable, and, like Horace, said the truth whilst laughing. As to Rousseau's hard words against Philinte, whom he calls "a scoundrel," "a gentle and even-tempered optimist," he appears to forget that scoundrels are never optimists, but pessimists, plausibly assuming that the world could not be worse, and seemingly so much the more severe in morals and honesty as they never attempt to bring them into practice.

Nisard, a well known modern French literary critic, defends *The Misanthrope*, and states that this play cannot be analyzed nor reproduced with any chance of success; that the action takes place in the drawing-room of a heartless coquette of fashion, who has many gallants. Only one of them, Alceste, really loves her. He is not wrong in despising men, but wrong in stating his feelings openly, when he discovers at last that he is betrayed. This is the whole plot of the piece, and the situations are just as commonplace, even if they do exist. The characters unfold themselves. Alceste has a lawsuit, but he will not go and visit his judge; he has a duel, because he does not wish to abandon his reputation as an *honnête homme*; Célimène is a flirt and triumphs over the prude Arsinoé, but is punished by Alceste. And this is the peculiarity of *The Misanthrope*. Every one is punished by his or her own vices or faults; and even Alceste, though he is too honest to deserve marrying a coquette, is in perpetual opposition during the whole play, receives a great shock at the end, and all this, because, although an honest man, he thinks he is the only honest man in the world.

It has often been said that posterity is represented by foreigners: let us listen for a few minutes to English, German, and Swiss critics on this play.

William Hazlitt says, in his *Lectures on Wit and Humour*—"With respect to his two most laboured comedies, the 'Tartuffe' and 'Misanthrope,' I confess I find them rather hard to get through. They have much of the improbability and extravagance of the others, united with the endless common-place prosing of French declamation. What can exceed, for example, the absurdity of the Misanthrope, who leaves his mistress after every proof of her attachment and constancy, for no other reason than that she will not submit to the technical formality of going to live with him in a wilderness? The characters, again, which Célimène gives of her female friends, near the opening of the play, are admirable satires (as good as Pope's characters of women), but not exactly in the spirit of comic dialogue."

Prescott, in his *Biographical and Critical Miscellanies*, has a very good Essay on Molière, in which he says: "We are now arrived at that period of Molière's career when he composed his '*Misanthrope*,' a play which some critics have esteemed his master-piece, and which all concur in admiring as one of the noblest productions of the modern drama. Its literary execution, too, of paramount importance in the eye of a French critic, is more nicely elaborated than any other of the pieces of Molière, if we except the *Tartuffe*, and its didactic dialogue displays a maturity of thought equal to what is to be found in the best satires of Boileau. It is the very didactic tone of this comedy, indeed, which, combined with its

want of eager, animating interest, made it less popular on its representation than some of his inferior pieces." With regard to Molière's sketching himself and his wife in the roles of Alceste and Célimène, Prescott comments thus upon it: "The respective parts which they performed in this piece, corresponds precisely with their respective situations; that of Célimène, a fascinating capricious coquette, insensible to every remonstrance, and selfishly bent on the gratification of her own appetites; and that of Alceste, perfectly sensible of the duplicity of his mistress, whom he vainly hopes to reform, and no less so of the unworthiness of his own passion, from which he as vainly hopes to extricate himself. The coincidences are too exact to be wholly accidental."

John Sterling, in his critical essay on *Characteristics of German Genius*, says: "The genius of Molière rose above the pitch of his contemporaries, and in spite of seeming destiny, made him a great original painter of life, and a worthy companion of Montaigne and Rabelais, who had preluded, somewhat as Chaucer among us, to the glories of a later age. His *Misanthrope* is more truly Shakespearean, more simply, deeply drawn from the realities of the human soul, than anything we have seen of the professedly Shakespearean school now shedding blood by pailfuls on the Parisian stage. This play, in fact, anticipates Rousseau, and stands in a very singular relation between *Hamlet* and *Faust*; and in like manner *Tartuffe* strikes the key-note of much that distinguishes Voltaire."

A Swiss literary critic, M. E. Rambert, in his work *Corneille, Racine et Molière*, writes that, in poets of the second order, speech kills the action: in Molière, on the contrary, it serves and vivifies it; that it is true that there is in *The Misanthrope* a moral question, but this always happens in lofty dramatic poetry; that no one can analyze a fictitious or real character, without stumbling upon some philosophic or moral problem, which ought to arise from the character of the hero. He further affirms that Philinte is not created only to give a reply, but that he is the model of a true friend, who bears all Alceste's whims and rebuffs. He also prefers Alceste to Tartuffe, because the first is one of those who possess all the attributes of humanity; says Alceste is superior to Shakespeare's Timon—whom he calls "a Job on his dunghill, but a Job full of hatred and bile"—because Alceste's hatred is akin to love, Timon's only humiliation and thirst for vengeance; believes that *The Misanthrope* produces in us a poetical impression, and contains not a satire, but a lesson, which leaves us in thought, but not haunted, as it were, by one idea, which becomes fatiguing. M. Rambert ends by stating, that, after the troubles of the Fronde, society had become philosophical, and liked to speculate on abstruse questions of morality; hence the appearance of La Rochefoucauld's *Maxims*—of which the first edition was published in 1665—and hence the *Misanthrope*, who gets angry at the wickedness of men, whilst the noble moralist judges them, despises them, but remains cool all the time.

Goethe, in his *Conversations with Eckermann* (1825), says: "Molière is so great, that one is astonished anew every time one reads him. He is a man by himself—his pieces border on tragedy; they are apprehensive, and no one has the courage to imitate them." And in 1827, the great German says: "*The Misanthrope*, which I read over and over again, as one of my most favourite pieces, is repugnant to him (Schlegel)." "It is not to be denied," continues he, "that Schlegel knows a great deal, and one is almost terrified at his extraordinary attainments and his extensive reading. But this is not enough. All the learning in the world is still no judgment. His criticism is completely one-sided, because in all theatri-

cal pieces he merely regards the skeleton of the plot and arrangement, and only points out small points of resemblance to great predecessors, without troubling himself in the least as to what the author brings forward of graceful life and the culture of a high soul. But of what use are all the arts of a talent if we do not find in a theatrical piece an amiable or a great personality of the author. This alone influences the cultivation of the people."

Paul Lindau, a living German critic of some celebrity, and who has written a *Life of Molière*, says, that "when our author wrote this play, he was forty-four years old; his friend Racine had betrayed him; his patroness, the Queen-Mother was dead; his enemies at Court had prevented the representation of the *Tartuffe*; his youthful wife gave him reason to be jealous; he had been ill for two months; and yet, in spite of all that, he wrote *The Misanthrope*." In this play, he attacks the court, its hollowness, its empty glitter and heads; for in spite of his admiration for Louis XIV., Molière did not spare the courtiers. Amidst the splendour of Versailles, its triumphant pæans, its sparkling fountains, shaded walks and rustling trees, where puppets, in velvet and silk, jump about and dance and sing, and think not of the morrow, our Moralist appears and asks himself—How are all these enjoyments obtained? And the answer is: "By lies and hypocrisy." The philosopher looks underneath the masks and the paint, and beholds the spectre of misery. He warns men to become sincere, honest, and true, for the earth trembles under their feet, the foundations of society are undermined by the worm of falsehood, thunder rolls in the distance and will break out a hundred years later. Alceste is the precursor of a threatening social revolution; these feelings have unconsciously moved him to speak; hence his dislike and hatred for lies and liars, and, "as all men are liars," the cause of his being a Misanthrope.

In the preface to this translation (Vol. I.,) I have stated that Philinte "pourtrays quiet common sense, amiability, intelligence, instruction, knowledge of the world, and a spirit of refined criticism." He possesses rather too much of all these qualities, which thus become faults. I imagine that Molière clearly indicates that Philinte has a far greater contempt for men than Alceste. The latter is very loud in all his denunciations against wickedness; his passion for sincerity often carries him to ridiculous extremes, but amidst all his vapouring, we feel that he is angry with rampant falsehood and deceit, but not that he hates his fellow-creatures: in fact, his very rage proves the contrary. Philinte has over much "quiet common sense;" he "treats the man of worth and the fop alike;" he has too much "amiability," for he pays compliments to old Emilia, to Dorilas, to Oronte about his sonnet; he shows his "spirit of refined criticism" by stating that "whatever he may discover, at any moment, people do not see him in a rage . . . that he takes men quietly just as they are;" "that his mind is not more shocked at seeing a man a rogue, unjust, or selfish, than at seeing vultures eager for prey, mischievous apes, or fury-lashed wolves." When he hears Alceste thundering against Célimène, Acaste and Clitandre slandering their acquaintances, he proves his "knowledge of the world" by coolly asking his friend why he takes such a great interest in those people. He never blames nor admires anything, except with some feeble adjectives. When Eliante states that she esteems Alceste, he only expresses his astonishment at seeing him in love. When his friend's heart is torn by jealousy, he can say nothing warmer than that "a letter may sometimes deceive by appearances, and not be as

guilty as you think." His "intelligence" is as characteristic as all his other qualities; he first tells his friend that the sincere Eliante has some inclination for him, and then, when Eliante informs Philinte that she might be induced to receive Alceste's addresses, he coolly informs her that in case his friend does not answer her love, he would only be too happy to have her affection transferred to himself. When in the last scene Eliante offers him her hand, he seems to get excited, and exclaims that he "could sacrifice my (his) life and soul for it;" but the lukewarmness he has displayed in his courtship, during the whole play, proves his excitement to be abnormal. It is true that he bears with the rebuffs of Alceste, but this is not out of friendship, but simply because he is too amiable; hence it would be too much trouble to argue. He has no warm blood coursing through his veins. I said just now that Philinte had a far greater contempt for men than Alceste. I do not mean that he shows this contempt openly. But the man to whom good or evil is theoretically alike, to whom all men are the same, and who is the same to all men, is the greatest Misanthrope that ever existed, for he is above or below humanity. It is not necessary that Philinte should have acted up to his principles; his very contempt for men forbids such a thing as action. What would be the good of it? His feebly beating heart cannot contain such a feeling as healthy hatred or even love. I imagine that he must have uttered his speeches with an affected drawl, as painful for him to produce as for his audience to listen to. He is the real prototype of the *nil admirari* school; he is no "scoundrel," as Rousseau says, for he has no passions, good or evil: he does not play the fool, for it requires not an intelligent, but a wise man, to play the fool; he is the chief of the *pococuranti*, who pursue the even tenor of their ways, without being moved or stirred by anything, who are too critically refined ever to do an evil deed or to admire a noble action; the worthy ancestor of those *petits crevés*, who strut languidly through life with their dainty dress and manners, with their eternal grin, their want of heart and patriotism, and their never varying answer, *pas si bête*.

In the third volume of the Select Comedies of M. de Molière, London, 1732, *The Misanthrope* is dedicated to the Duke of Montagu, under the name of *The Man-Hater* in the following words:—

The *Misanthrope* of MOLIÈRE in *French* and *English*, assumes the honour of appearing in the World under your GRACE's Patronage. The Translator doubts not but Your GRACE will be the first to forgive what has the Face of monstrous Impriety, his dedicating the *Man-hater* to the most humane Man in *England*.

Your GRACE very well knows that this Play has always bore the Character, amongst Men of Taste and Judgment, of being the most finished Piece of this Author, in which are united the utmost Efforts of Genius and Art.

The Subject, MY LORD, is single, and the Unities exactly observ'd. The principal Character is strong, and distinguish'd with the boldest Strokes of a masterly Pencil; 'tis well preserv'd, and throughout intirely uniform. The under Characters are equally well drawn, and admirably chose to cast each their proper Degree of Light upon the Chief Figure: The Scenes and Incidents are so contriv'd and conducted as to diversify the main Character, and set it in all the different Points of Light one can wish to see it in. The Sentiments are not only proper, but strong and nervous, and the whole Piece so fraught with good Sense, that 'twere hard to find an indifferent Line in it. So just is the Observation of *Rapin*, that the *Misanthrope* is the most finish'd, and withal the most singular Character that ever appear'd on the Stage.

Not but that the Title of *Man-Hater*, MY LORD, has been famous in the World for many Centuries, and is as well known as the Name of *Timon* of *Athens*; without any Impeachment of what the *French* Critic has said of the singularity of our *Misanthrope*; for the Character of the antient *Man-Hater* had little uncommon in

it, it took its Rise merely from personal Ill-usage and Disappointment, and was no more Strange than that one who suffers by Excess of Good-nature and Credulity, shou'd run into the other Extreme of being excessively revengeful and suspicious.

Whereas MOLIÈRE'S *Man-Hater* owes his Character to an over-rigid Virtue, which cou'd give no Quarter to the Vices of Mankind; to a Sincerity, particularly, which disdain'd that undistinguishing Complaisance, those surfeiting expressions of Kindness to all in common, which leave Men no Language to express Approbation and Friendship to the wise and virtuous, but what is prostituted to flatter Fools and Knaves: so that *Alceste* hates men not to injure, but to avoid them.

It must at the same time, be confess'd, MY LORD, that MOLIÈRE drew not this Character for Imitation. Had he done so, he wou'd made him only a good-natured, brave, and generous *Plain-dealer*, not a *Man-Hater*; as far from the Churlishness of *Alceste* as from the Over-civility of *Philintes*. He wou'd have drawn him severe, but not Cynical; an Enemy to Men's Vices but not to their Persons; inflexibly virtuous, but not ill-natur'd; reserved, yet not unsociable; sincere with good Manners. In short, he wou'd have made him a MONTAGU. The character had then been unexceptionable—I am, MY LORD, Your GRACE'S most Faithful, most Obedient Humble Servant,

THE TRANSLATOR.

An author of the end of last century, Fabre d'Églantine, who devoted his time partly to politics and partly to literature, wrote a play, *The Philinte of Molière*, in which he made of Philinte an odious and miserable egotist, and of Alceste an exaggerated philanthropist. Geoffroy, a celebrated French critic, said that *The Philinte* compared to *The Misanthrope*, was like anarchy in comparison with a good government. Several other *Misanthropes* have also been attempted on the French stage. Brécourt (See Introductory Notice to *The Impromptu of Versailles*, Vol. I.,) wrote a comedy in one act, called *Timon*, first performed on the 12th of August, 1684; and Delisle wrote a three-act play, called *Timon the Misanthrope*, first brought out on the 2d of January, 1782, and in which an ass is changed into harlequin, and gives lessons of kindness and wisdom to his former master Timon.

In English, part of *The Misanthrope* has been borrowed by Wycherley for *The Plain Dealer*, of which Manley and Olivia are decided imitations of Alceste and Célimène, and in which one scene is imitated from *The School for Wives criticised* (see Introductory Notice to *The School for Wives criticised*, Vol. I.). Baker, in his "Biographia Dramatica," most amusingly says:—"The *Misanthrope* (of Molière), and other things, seem to have been in Wycherley's mind when he traced his characters; but when subjects are so well handled, it is but mean cavilling to say so much about it, and in revenge, if he had recourse to French writers, English writers have had recourse to him." M. Taine has another opinion of Wycherley and his play, and I entirely agree with him. He says in the *History of English Literature*:—"If he (Wycherley) translates the part of Molière, he wipes out at one stroke the manners of a great lady, the woman's delicacy, the tact of the lady of the house, the politeness, the refined air, the superiority of wit and knowledge of the world, in order to substitute for them the impudence and deceit of a foul-mouthed courtesan. . . A certain gift hovers over all—namely, vigour. . . He is a realist, not on set purpose, as the realist of our day, but naturally. . . . Our modern nerves could not endure the portrait Olivia draws of Manley. . . The woman's independence is like a professed courtesan's. . . . Manley is copied after Alceste . . . and is not a courtier but a ship-captain, with the bearing of the sailor of the time, his cloak stained with tar, and smelling of brandy, ready with blows or foul oaths, calling those he came across dogs and slaves, and when they displeased him, kicking them down stairs . . . Wycherley took to himself in his dedication the

title of his hero, *Plain Dealer*; he fancied he had drawn the portrait of a frank, honest man . . . he had only given . . . the model of an unreserved and energetic brute."

Sir Walter Scott, in his *Essay on the Drama*, says,—"*The Plain Dealer* is, indeed, imitated from Molière; but the principal character has more the force of a real portrait, and is better contrasted with the perverse, bustling, masculine, pettyfogging, and litigious character of Widow Blackacre, than Alceste is with any character of *The Misanthrope*."

The late Lord Macaulay, in his *Essay on the Comic Dramatists of the Restoration*, uses the following words about Wycherley's *Plain Dealer*:—"Molière exhibited in his *Misanthrope* a pure and noble mind, which had been sorely vexed by the sight of perfidy and malevolence, disguised under forms of politeness. As every extreme naturally generates its contrary, Alceste adopts a standard of good and evil directly opposed to that of the society which surrounds him. Courtesy, seems to him a vice; and those stern virtues which are neglected by the fops and coquettes of Paris become too exclusively the objects of his veneration. He is often to blame; he is often ridiculous; but he is always a good man; and the feeling which he inspires is regret that a person so estimable should be so unamiable. Wycherley borrowed Alceste, and turned him—we quote the words of so lenient a critic as Mr. Leigh Hunt—into 'a ferocious sensualist, who believed himself as great a rascal as he thought everybody else.' The surliness of Molière's hero is copied and caricatured. But the most nauseous libertinism and the most dastardly fraud are substituted for the purity and integrity of the original. And, to make the whole complete, Wycherley does not seem to have been aware that he was not drawing the portrait of an eminently honest man. So depraved was his moral taste, that, while he firmly believed that he was producing a picture of virtue too exalted for the commerce of the world, he was really delineating the greatest rascal that is to be found, even in his own writings."

Voltaire has imitated *The Plain Dealer* in a five-act comedy in verse, called *La Prude*, and represented for the first time in the private theatre of the Duchess of Maine, at Anet. It is one of the funniest, and, for the student, one of the most interesting imitations I have ever read; and the attempt of Voltaire to hide the coarseness of Manley and Olivia under an elegant French dress, and to make them fit to be represented before the rather finical, although witty, company at Anet, is highly entertaining. This is the moral of the piece after Dorise (Olivia) is found out: "*Cela Pourra d'abord faire jaser; mais tout s'appaise, et tout doit s'appaiser.*"

Sheridan has also borrowed some scenes from *The Misanthrope* for *The School for Scandal*, a comedy of which M. Taine, in his work already mentioned, says,—"Sheridan took two characters from Fielding, Blifil and Tom Jones; two plays of Molière, *Le Misanthrope* and *Tartuffe*; and from these puissant materials, condensed with admirable cleverness, he has constructed the most brilliant firework imaginable. Molière has only one female slanderer, Célimène; the other characters serve only to give her a cue: there is quite enough of such a jeering woman; she rails on within certain bounds, without hurry, like a true queen of the drawing-room, who has time to converse, who knows that she is listened to, who listens to herself; she is a woman of society, who preserves the tone of refined conversation; and in order to smooth down the harshness, her slanders are interrupted by the calm reason and sensible discourse of the amiable Eliante. Molière represents the malice of the world without exaggeration; but in Sheridan they are rather caricatured than depicted.

The sixth Scene of the second Act of Congreve's *The Way of the World*, performed at the theatre, Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, in 1700, has also been partly inspired by the fifth scene of the second act of Molière's play. Congreve seems to have liked Molière's *Misanthrope*, for he imitated the same scenes of the same play in *Love for Love* (Act i., scenes 9-15). (See Introductory Notice to *Don Juan*). The characters there are called Valentine, Scandal, Tattle, and Mrs. Frail, and are certainly not copied, but based upon those of Molière.

Th. Shadwell, in *The Sullen Lovers* (see Introductory Notice to *The Bores*, Vol. I.), has likewise imitated the first scene of the first act of *The Misanthrope*.

In Baker's *Biographia Dramatica*, it is stated that a certain Mr. John Huges translated *The Misanthrope* from Voltaire—Molière is evidently meant; and that this translation . . . "was afterwards reprinted with Molière's other plays translated by Ozell, without any notice by whom it was Englished."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ALCESTE, *in love with Célimène.*²

PHILINTE, *his friend.*

ORONTE, *in love with Célimène.*

CÉLIMÈNE, *beloved by Alceste.*

ÉLIANTE, *her cousin.*

ARSINOÉ, *Célimène's friend.*

ACASTE, }
CLITANDRE, } *marquises.*

BASQUE, *servant to Célimène.*

DUBOIS, *servant to Alceste.*

AN OFFICER OF THE MARÉCHAUSSÉE.³

Scene.—AT PARIS, IN CÉLIMÈNE'S HOUSE.

² This part was played by Molière himself. In the inventory taken after Molière's death, and given by M. E. Soulié in the *Recherches sur Molière*, we find the dress for the representation of *The Misanthrope*, consisting of breeches and jacket of a gold-coloured and grey striped brocade, lined with tabby, ornamented with green ribbands; the waistcoat of gold brocade, silk stockings and gaiters.

³ The *maréchaussée* was a kind of mounted police, doing formerly the same duty as the gendarmerie does now. It was commanded by a *prévôt-général*, under the orders of the marshals of France.

THE PHYSICIAN IN SPITE OF HIMSELF.

(*LE MÉDECIN MALGRÉ LUI.*)

ACT I.

The Scene represents a Forest.

SCENE I.—SGANARELLE, MARTINE (*appearing on the stage, quarrelling*).

SGAN. No ; I tell you that I will do nothing of the kind, and that it is for me to speak, and to be master.

MART. And I tell you that I will have you to live as I like, and that I am not married to you to put up with your vagaries.

SGAN. Oh ! what a nuisance it is to have a wife ! and Aristotle is perfectly right in saying that a woman is worse than a demon.⁴

MART. Look at Master Clever, with his silly Aristotle !

SGAN. Yes, Master Clever. Find me another faggot-binder who can argue upon things as I can, who has served a famous physician for six years, and who, when only a boy, had his rudiments at his fingers' ends!⁵

⁴ It would be difficult to give the passage in Aristotle, where such a thing is stated.

⁵ The rudiments stand here for a little book containing the elements of the Latin tongue. Compare Shakespeare in *As You Like It* (Act. v., Scene 4), who says—

“ This boy is forest-born,
And has been tutored in the rudiments
Of many desperate studies.”

MART. Plague on the arrant fool.⁶

SGAN. Plague on the slut!

MART. Cursed be the hour and the day when I took it into my head to say yes.

SGAN. Cursed be the cuckold of a notary that made me sign my own ruination.

MART. Certainly it well becomes you to complain on that score. Ought you not rather to thank Heaven every minute of the day that you have me for a wife? and did you deserve to marry a woman like me?

SGAN. It is true you did me too much honour, and I had great occasion to be satisfied with my wedding-night. Zounds! do not make me open my mouth too wide: I might say certain things . . .

MART. What? What could you say?

SGAN. Enough; let us drop the subject. It is enough that we know what we know, and that you were very glad to meet with me.

MART. What do you call very glad to meet with you? A fellow who will drive me to the hospital—a debauched, deceitful wretch, who gobbles up every farthing I have got!

SGAN. That is a lie: for I drink part of it.

MART. Who sells piecemeal every stick of furniture in the house!

SGAN. That is living upon one's means.

MART. Who has taken the very bed from under me!

SGAN. You will get up all the earlier.

MART. In short, who does not leave me a stick in the whole house.

SGAN. There will be less trouble in moving.

MART. And who from morning to night does nothing but gamble and drink!

SGAN. That is done in order not to get in the dumps.

MART. And what am I to do all the while with my family?

SGAN. Whatever you like.

MART. I have got four poor children on my hands.

SGAN. Put them down.

⁶ The original has *fou fieffé*. See Vol. I., page 486, note 14.

MART. Who keep asking me every moment for bread.

SGAN. Whip them. When I have had enough to eat and to drink, every one in the house ought to be satisfied.

MART. And do you mean to tell me, you sot, that things can always go on so?

SGAN. Wife, let us proceed gently, if you please.

MART. That I am to bear forever with your insolence and your debauchery?

SGAN. Do not let us get into a passion, wife.

MART. And that I do not know the way to bring you back to your duty?

SGAN. Wife, you know that I am not very patient, and that my arm is somewhat heavy.

MART. I laugh at your threats.

SGAN. My sweet wife, my pet, your skin is itching as usual.

MART. I will let you see that I am not afraid of you.

SGAN. My dearest rib, you have set your heart upon a thrashing.⁷

MART. Do you think that I am frightened at your talk?

SGAN. Sweet object of my affections, I shall box your ears for you.

MART. Sot that you are!

SGAN. I shall thrash you.

MART. Walking wine-cask!

SGAN. I shall pummel you.

MART. Infamous wretch!

SGAN. I shall curry your skin for you.

MART. Wretch! villain! deceiver! cur! scoundrel! gal-
lows-bird! churl! rogue! scamp! thief! . . .

SGAN. You will have it, will you?

(Takes a stick and beats her.)

MART. *(shrieking)*. Help! help! help! help!

SGAN. That is the real way of quieting you.

SCENE II.—M. ROBERT, SGANARELLE, MARTINE.

M. ROB. Hulloo, hulloo, hulloo! Fie! What is this?

⁷ The original has *Vous avez envie de me dérober quelque chose*, You wish to rob me of something,—meaning, of course, “of a box on the ear.” In English we say also familiarly of any one who receives something which he richly deserves: He has not stolen that.

What a disgraceful thing ! Plague take the scamp to beat his wife so.

MART. (*Her arms akimbo, speaks to M. Robert, and makes him draw back; at last she gives him a slap on the face*). And I like him to beat me, I do.

M. ROB. If that is the case, I consent with all my heart.

MART. What are you interfering with ?

M. ROB. I am wrong.

MART. Is it any of your business ?

M. ROB. You are right.

MART. Just look at this jackanapes, who wishes to hinder husbands from beating their wives !

M. ROB. I apologize.

MART. What have you got to say to it ?

M. ROB. Nothing.

MART. Is it for you to poke your nose into it ?

M. ROB. No.

MART. Mind your own business.

M. ROB. I shall not say another word.

MART. It pleases me to be beaten.

M. ROB. Agreed.

MART. It does not hurt you.

M. ROB. That is true.

MART. And you are an ass to interfere with what does not concern you.

M. ROB. Neighbour, I ask your pardon with all my heart. Go on, thrash and beat your wife as much as you like ; I shall help you, if you wish it. (*He goes towards Sganarelle, who also speaks to him, makes him draw back, beats him with the stick he has been using, and puts him to flight*).

SGAN. I do not wish it.

M. ROB. Ah ! that is a different thing.

SGAN. I will beat her if I like ; and I will not beat her if I do not like.

M. ROB. Very good.

SGAN. She is my wife, and not yours.

M. ROB. Undoubtedly.

SGAN. It is not for you to order me about.

M. ROB. Just so.

SGAN. I do not want your help.

M. ROB. Exactly so.

SGAN. And it is like your impertinence to meddle with other people's business. Remember that Cicero says that between the tree and the finger you should not put the bark.⁸ (*He drives him away, then comes back to his wife, and says to her, squeezing her hand*).

SCENE III.—SGANARELLE, MARTINE.

SGAN. Come, let us make it up. Shake hands.

MART. Yes, after having beaten me thus !

SGAN. Never mind that. Shake hands.

MART. I will not.

SGAN. Eh ?

MART. No.

SGAN. Come, wife !

MART. I shall not.

SGAN. Come, I tell you.

MART. I will do nothing of the kind.

SGAN. Come, come, come.

MART. No ; I will be angry.

SGAN. Bah ! it is a trifle. Do.

MART. Leave me alone.

SGAN. Shake hands, I tell you.

MART. You have treated me too ill.

SGAN. Well ! I beg your pardon ; put your hand there.

MART. I forgive you ; (*aside, softly*), but I shall make you pay for it.

SGAN. You are silly to take notice of it ; these are trifles that are necessary now and then to keep up good feeling ; and five or six strokes of a cudgel between people who love each other, only brighten the affections. There now ! I am going to the wood, and I promise you that you shall have more than a hundred faggots to-day.

SCÈNE IV.—MARTINE, *alone*.

Go, my lad, whatever look I may put on, I shall not forget to pay you out ; and I am dying to hit upon some-

⁸ Sganarelle quotes the proverb wrong, which says that between the tree and the bark one ought not to put one's finger, which means figuratively, "Never interfere in things which do not concern you." Of course Cicero says nothing of the kind.

thing to punish you for the blows you gave me. I know well enough that a wife has always the means of being revenged upon her husband ; but that is too delicate a punishment for my gallows-bird ; I want a revenge that shall strike home a little more, or it will not be satisfaction for the insult which I have received.

SCENE V.—VALÈRE, LUCAS, MARTINE.

LUC. (*To Valère, without seeing Martine*). I'facks we have undertaken a curious errand ; and I do not know, for my part, what we shall get by it.⁹

VAL. (*To Lucas, without seeing Martine*). What is the use of grumbling, good foster-father ? we are bound to do as our master tells us ; and, besides, we have both of us some interest in the health of his daughter, our mistress ; for her marriage, which is put off through her illness, will no doubt bring us in something. Horace, who is generous, is the most likely to succeed among her suitors ; and although she has shown some inclination for a certain Léandre, you know well enough that her father would never consent to receive him for his son-in-law.

MART. (*Musing on one side, thinking herself alone*). Can I not find out some way of revenging myself ?

LUC. (*To Valère*). But what an idea has he taken into his head, since the doctors are quite at a loss.¹⁰

VAL. (*To Lucas*). You may sometimes find by dint of seeking, what cannot be found at once ; and often in the most unlikely spots you may . . .

MART. (*Thinking herself always alone*). Yes ; I must pay him out, no matter at what cost. Those cudgel blows lie heavy on my stomach ; I cannot digest them ; and . . . (*She is saying all this musingly, and as she moves, she comes in contact with the two men*). Ah, gentlemen, I beg your pardon, I did not notice you, and was puzzling my brain about something that perplexes me.

⁹ Lucas speaks in a provincial dialect, which I think it unnecessary to endeavour to imitate in English.

¹⁰ The original has *puisque les médecins y ont tous perdu leur latin* "since the doctors have lost all their Latin over it." I suppose in allusion to the latinized gibberish which the doctors in Molière's time used to employ in their consultations.

VAL. Every one has his troubles in this world, and we also are looking for something that we should be very glad to find.

MART. Is it something in which I can assist you?

VAL. Perhaps. We are endeavouring to meet with some clever man, some special physician, who could give some relief to our master's daughter, seized with an illness which has at once deprived her of the use of her tongue. Several physicians have already exhausted all their knowledge on her behalf; but sometimes one may find people with wonderful secrets, and certain peculiar remedies, who very often succeed where others have failed; and that is the sort of man we are looking for.

MART. (*Softly and aside*). Ah! This is an inspiration from Heaven to revenge myself on my rascal. (*Aloud*). You could never have addressed yourselves to any one more able to find what you want; and we have a man here, the most wonderful fellow in the world for desperate maladies.

VAL. Ah! for mercy's sake, where can we meet with him?

MART. You will find him just now in that little spot yonder, where he is amusing himself in cutting wood.

LUC. A doctor who cuts wood!

VAL. Who is amusing himself in gathering some simples, you mean to say?

MART. No; he is a strange fellow who takes a delight in this; a fantastic, eccentric, whimsical man, whom you would never take to be what he really is. He goes about dressed in a most extraordinary fashion, pretends sometimes to be very ignorant, keeps his knowledge to himself, and dislikes nothing so much every day as using the marvellous talents which God has given him for the healing art.

VAL. It is a wonderful thing that all these great men have always some whim, some slight grain of madness mixed with their learning.

MART. The madness of this man is greater than can be imagined, for sometimes he has to be beaten before he will own his ability; and I warn you beforehand that you will not succeed, that he will never own that he is a phy-

sician, unless you take each a stick, and compel him, by dint of blows, to admit at last what he will conceal at first. It is thus that we act when we have need of him.

VAL. What a strange delusion!

MART. That is true; but, after that, you shall see that he works wonders.

VAL. What is his name?

MART. His name is Sganarelle. But it is very easy to recognise him. He is a man with a large black beard, and who wears a ruff, and a yellow and green coat.

LUC. A yellow and green coat! He is then a parrot-doctor?

VAL. But is it really true that he is as clever as you say?

MART. As clever. He is a man who works miracles. About six months ago, a woman was given up by all the other physicians; she was considered dead at least six hours, and they were going to bury her, when they dragged by force the man we are speaking of to her bedside. Having seen her, he poured a small drop of something into her mouth; and at that very instant she rose from her bed, and began immediately to walk in her room as if nothing had happened.

LUC. Hah!

VAL. It must have been a drop of liquid gold.¹¹

MART. Possibly so. Not more than three weeks ago, a young child, twelve years old, fell from the top of the belfry, and smashed his head, arms, and legs on the stones. No sooner took they our man to it, than he rubbed the whole body with a certain ointment, which he knows how to prepare; and the child immediately rose on its legs, and ran away to play at chuck-farthing.

LUC. Hah!

VAL. This man must have the universal heal-all.¹²

MART. Who doubts it?

LUC. Odds-bobs! that is the very man we want. Let us go quickly and fetch him.

¹¹ The liquid gold (*aurum potable*) was long thought to be a most wonderful remedy, and was in use even during the last century.

¹² Liquid gold was formerly thought to cure all diseases, hence the name of "universal heal-all."

VAL. We thank you for the service you have rendered us.

MART. But do not fail to remember the warning I have given you.

LUC. Hey! Zooks! leave it to us. If he wants nothing but a thrashing, we will gain our point.¹³

VAL. (*To Lucas*). We are very glad to have met with this woman; and I conceive the best hopes in the world from it.

SCENE VI.—SGANARELLE, VALÈRE, LUCAS.

SGAN. (*Singing behind the Scene*). La, la, la . . .

VAL. I hear some one singing and cutting wood.

SGAN. (*Coming on, with a bottle in his hand, without perceiving Valère or Lucas*). La, la, la . . . Really I have done enough to deserve a drink. Let us take a little breath. (*He drinks*). This wood is as salt as the very devil.¹⁴ (*Sings*).

*How sweet to hear,
My pretty flask,
How sweet to hear,
Your little gull, gull!
No fate with mine could vie,
If never you ran dry,
Oh! darling little flask,
But constantly were full!*¹⁵

¹³ In the original *la vache est à nous*, the cow is ours.

¹⁴ Meaning that he wants something to drink.

¹⁵ Tradition mentions that the President Rose, a few days after the first representation of *The Physician in spite of himself*, met Molière at the Duke de Montausier, and accused the dramatist, before a numerous company, of having translated Sganarelle's couplet from the Latin, which was itself borrowed from the Greek. Molière denied the fact; and to his great surprise, the President recited the following verses, which astounded Molière, and which were afterwards admitted by Rose to be a translation from the playwright's original, which we give as well:—

Qu'ils sont doux,	Quam dulces,
Bouteille jolie,	Amphora amœna,
Qu'ils sont doux,	Quam dulces,
Vos petits glougloux!	Sunt tuæ voces!
Mais mon sort ferait bien des jaloux,	Dum fundis merum in calices,
Si vous étiez toujours remplie,	Utinam semper esses plena!
Ah! bouteille, ma mie,	Ah! Ah! cara mea lagena,
Pourquoi vous videz-vous?	Vacua cur jaces?

Come! Zounds! we must take care not to get the blues.

VAL. (*Softly to Lucas*). This is the very man.

LUC. (*Softly to Valère*). I think you are right, and that we have just hit upon him.

VAL. Let us look a little closer.

SGAN. (*Hugging the bottle*). Ah! you little rogue! I love you, my pretty dear! (*He sings; but perceiving Lucas and Valère, who are examining him, he lowers his voice.*

*No fate . . . with mine . . . could . . . vie,
Is . . .*

(*Seeing that they examine him more closely*). Whom the deuce do these people want?

VAL. (*To Lucas*). It is surely he.

LUC. (*To Valère*). There he is, exactly as he has been described to us.

SGAN. (*Aside*). (*At this point he puts down his bottle; and Valère stooping down to bow to him, he thinks that it is in order to snatch it away, and puts it on the other side. As Lucas is doing the same thing as Valère, Sganarelle takes it up again, and hugs it to his breast, with various grimaces which make a great deal of by-play*). They are consulting each other, while looking at me. What can be their intentions!

VAL. Sir, is not your name Sganarelle?

SGAN. Hey! What!

VAL. I ask you if your name is not Sganarelle.

SGAN. (*Turning first to Valère, then to Lucas*). Yes, and no. It depends on what you want with him.

VAL. We want nothing with him, but to offer him our utmost civilities.

SGAN. In that case my name is Sganarelle.

VAL. We are delighted to see you, Sir. We have been recommended to you for what we are in search of; and we have come to implore your help, of which we are in want.

SGAN. If it be anything, gentlemen, that belongs to my little trade, I am quite ready to oblige you.

VAL. You are too kind to us, Sir. But put your hat on, Sir, if you please; the sun might hurt you.

LUC. Pray, Sir, put it on.

SGAN. (*Aside*). What a deal of ceremony these people use. (*He puts his hat on*).

VAL. You must not think it strange, Sir, that we have addressed ourselves to you. Clever people are always much sought after, and we have been informed of your capacity.

SGAN. It is true, gentlemen, that I am the best hand in the world at making faggots.

VAL. Oh! Sir . . .

SGAN. I spare no pains, and make them in a fashion that leaves nothing to be desired.

VAL. That is not the question we have come about, Sir.

SGAN. But I charge a hundred and ten sous the hundred.

VAL. Let us not speak about that, if you please.

SGAN. I pledge you my word that I could not sell them for less.

VAL. We know what is what, Sir.

SGAN. If you know what is what, you know that I charge that price.

VAL. This is a joke, Sir, but . . .

SGAN. It is no joke at all, I cannot bate a farthing.

VAL. Let us talk differently, please.

SGAN. You may find some elsewhere for less; there be faggots and faggots; but for those which I make . . .

VAL. Let us change the conversation, pray, Sir.

SGAN. I take my oath that you shall not have them for less, not a fraction.

VAL. Fie! Fie!

SGAN. No, upon my word, you shall have to pay that price. I am speaking frankly, and I am not the man to overcharge.

VAL. Ought a gentleman like you, Sir, to amuse himself with those clumsy pretences, to lower himself to talk thus? Ought so learned a man, such a famous physician as you are, to wish to disguise himself in the eyes of the world and keep buried his great talents?

SGAN. (*Aside*). He is mad.

VAL. Pray, Sir, do not dissemble with us.

SGAN. What do you mean?

LUC. All this beating about the bush is useless. We know what we know.

SGAN. What do you know? What do you want with me? For whom do you take me?

VAL. For what you are, a great physician.

SGAN. Physician yourself; I am not one, and I have never been one.

VAL. (*Aside*). Now the fit is on him. (*Aloud*). Sir, do not deny things any longer, and do not, if you please, make us have recourse to unpleasant extremities.

SGAN. Have recourse to what?

VAL. To certain things that we should be sorry for.

SGAN. Zounds! Have recourse to whatever you like. I am not a physician, and do not understand what you mean.

VAL. (*Aside*). Well, I perceive that we shall have to apply the remedy. (*Aloud*). Once more, Sir, I pray you to confess what you are.

LUC. Odds bobs, do not talk any more nonsense; and confess plainly that you are a physician.

SGAN. (*Aside*). I am getting in a rage.

VAL. What is the good of denying what all the world knows?

LUC. Why all these funny falsehoods? What is the good of it?

SGAN. One word is as good as a thousand, gentlemen. I tell you that I am not a physician.

VAL. You are not a physician?

SGAN. No.

LUC. You are not a physician?

SGAN. No, I tell you.

VAL. Since you will have it so, we must make up our minds to do it. (*They each take a stick, and thrash him*).

SGAN. Hold! hold! hold, gentlemen! I will be anything you like.

VAL. Why, Sir, do you oblige us to use this violence?

LUC. Why do you make us take the trouble of giving you a beating?

VAL. I assure you that I regret it with all my heart.

LUC. Upon my word I am sorry for it too.

SGAN. What the devil does it all mean, gentlemen?

For pity's sake, is it a joke, or are you both gone out of your minds, to wish to make me out a physician?

VAL. What! you do not give in yet, and you still deny being a physician?

SGAN. The devil take me if I am one!

LUC. Are you not a physician?

SGAN. No, plague choke me! (*They begin to thrash him again*). Hold! hold! Well, gentlemen, yes, since you will have it so, I am a physician, I am a physician—an apothecary into the bargain, if you like. I prefer saying yes to everything to being knocked about so.

VAL. Ah! that is right, Sir; I am delighted to see you so reasonable.

LUC. It does my heart good to hear you speak in this way.

VAL. I beg your pardon with all my heart.

LUC. I hope you will forgive me for the liberty I have taken.

SGAN. (*Aside*). Bless my soul! Am I perhaps myself mistaken, and have I become a physician without being aware of it?

VAL. You shall not regret, Sir, having shown us what you are; and you shall certainly be satisfied.

SGAN. But, tell me, gentlemen, may you not be yourselves mistaken? Is it quite certain that I am a physician?

LUC. Yes, upon my word!

SGAN. Really and truly.

VAL. Undoubtedly.

SGAN. The devil take me if I knew it!

VAL. Nonsense! You are the cleverest physician in the world.

SGAN. Ha, ha!

LUC. A physician who has cured I do not know how many complaints.

SGAN. The dickens I have!

VAL. A woman was thought dead for six hours; she was ready to be buried when you, with a drop of something, brought her to again, and made her walk at once about the room.

SGAN. The deuce I did!

LUC. A child of twelve fell from the top of the belfry, by which he had his head, his legs, and his arms smashed; and you, with I do not know what ointment, made him immediately get up on his feet, and off he ran to play chuck-farthing.

SGAN. The devil I did!

VAL. In short, Sir, you will be satisfied with us, and you shall earn whatever you like, if you allow us to take you where we intend.

SGAN. I shall earn whatever I like?

VAL. Yes.

SGAN. In that case I am a physician: there is no doubt of it. I had forgotten it; but I recollect it now. What is the matter? Where am I to go?

VAL. We will conduct you. The matter is to see a girl who has lost her speech.

SGAN. Indeed! I have not found it.

VAL. (*Softly to Lucas*). How he loves his joke! (*To Sganarelle*). Come along, Sir!

SGAN. Without a physician's gown!

VAL. We will get one.

SGAN. (*Presenting his bottle to Valère*). You carry this: I put my juleps in there (*Turning round to Lucas and spitting on the ground*). And you, stamp on this, by order of the physician.

LUC. Odds sniggers! this is a physician I like. I think he will do, for he is a comical fellow.

ACT II.

(*The scene represents a room in G ron te's house.*)

SCENE I.—G RONTE, VAL RE, LUCAS, JACQUELINE.

VAL. Yes, sir, I think you will be satisfied; we have brought the greatest physician in the world with us.

LUC. Oh! Zooks! this one beats everything; all the others are not worthy to hold the candle to him.¹⁶

¹⁶ The original has *tous les autres ne sont pas daignes de li d chausser ses souliers*, all the others are not worthy to take off his shoes.

VAL. He is a man who has performed some marvellous cures.

LUC. Who has put dead people on their legs again.

VAL. He is somewhat whimsical, as I have told you; and at times there are moments when his senses wander, and he does not seem what he really is.

LUC. Yes, he loves a joke, and one would say sometimes that he has got a tile loose somewhere.¹⁷

VAL. But in reality, it is all learning this; and very often he says things quite beyond any one's comprehension.

LUC. When he sets about it, he talks as finely as if he were reading a book.

VAL. He has already a great reputation hereabout, and everybody comes to consult him.

GER. I am very anxious to see him; send him to me quickly.

VAL. I am going to fetch him.

SCENE II.—GÉRONTE, JACQUELINE, LUCAS.

JACQ. Upon my word, Sir, this one will do just the same as all the rest.¹⁸ I think it will be six of the one and half-a-dozen of the others; and the best medicine to give to your daughter would, in my opinion, be a handsome strapping husband, for whom she could have some love.¹⁹

Ger. Lord bless my soul, nurse dear, you are meddling with many things!

LUC. Hold your tongue, mother Jacqueline; it is not for you to poke your nose there.

JACQ. I tell you, and a dozen more of you,²⁰ that all these physicians do her no good; that your daughter

¹⁷ The original has *qu'il a quelque petit coup de hache à la tête*, that he has received some small blow with an axe on his head.

¹⁸ Jacqueline talks in a kind of peasants' dialect, which cannot be translated. The first sentence is thus in the original: *Par ma fi, monsieur, ceti-ci fera justement ce qu'ant fait les autres.*

¹⁹ Something similar is said by Gros-René in the third scene of one of Molière's early farces, *The flying Physician* (*Le Médecin volant*), which will be given in the last volume of this edition.

²⁰ The original has an attempt at a play on words: *je vous dis et vous douze*, because *dis*, say, and *dix*, ten, have nearly the same pronunciation.

wants something else than rhubarb and senna, and that a husband is a plaster which cures all girls' complaints.

GER. Would any one have her in her present state, with that affliction on her? and when I intended her to marry, has she not opposed my wishes?

JACQ. No wonder. You wished to give her a man whom she does not like. Why did you not give her to Monsieur Léandre, who takes her fancy? She would have been very obedient, and I vouch for it that he will take her as she is, if you but give her to him.

GER. Léandre is not the man we want; he has not got a fortune like the other.

JACQ. He has got an uncle who is so rich, and whose fortune he will inherit.

GER. All these expectations seem to me but moonshine. Brag is a good dog, but Holdfast is a better; and we run a great risk in waiting for dead men's shoes. Death is not always at the beck and call of gentlemen heirs; and while the grass grows, the cow starves.²¹

JACQ. That is all well and good, but I have always heard that in marriage, as in everything else, happiness excels riches. Fathers and mothers have this cursed habit of asking always, "How much has he got?" and "How much has she got?" And gaffer Peter has married his Simonette to that lout Thomas, because he has got a few more vineyards than young Robin, for whom the girl had a fancy; and now the poor creature is as yellow as a guinea, and has not looked like herself ever since. That is a good example for you, Sir. After all, folks have but their pleasure in this world; and I would sooner give my daughter a husband whom she likes, than have all the riches in the country.²²

²¹ This is rather a free translation of G ronte's speech. The original has: *Tous ces biens   venir me semblent autant de chansons. Il n'est rien tel ce qu'on tient; et l'on court grand risque de s'abuser, lorsque l'on compte sur le bien qu'un autre vous garde. La mort n'a pas toujours les oreilles ouvertes aux yeux et aux pri res de messieurs les h ritiers; et l'on a le temps d'avoir les dents longues, lorsqu'on attend, pour vivre, le tr pas de quelqu'un. Avoir les dents longues* is, according to G nin's *Lexique compar  de la langue de Moli re*, to be hungry, because hunger is supposed to sharpen one's teeth.

²² The original has *toutes les rentes de la Biousse*, of Beauce, because it is one of the richest agricultural parts of France—Beauce having for

GER. Bless me, nurse, how you chatter! Hold your tongue, let me beg of you; you take too much upon yourself, and you will spoil your milk.

LUC. (*Slapping G ron te's shoulder at every word*). Indeed, be silent; you are too saucy. The master does not want your speeches, and he knows what he is about. All you have got to do is to suckle your baby, without arguing so much. Our master is the girl's father, and he is good and clever enough to know what she wants.

GER. Gently, gently.

LUC. (*Still slapping G ron te's shoulder*). I wish to show her her place, and teach her the respect due to you, Sir.

GER. Very well. But it does not need all this gesticulating.

SCENE III.—VAL RE, SGANARELLE, G RONTE, LUCAS, JACQUELINE.

VAL. Look out, Sir, here is our physician coming.

GER. (*To Sganarelle*). I am delighted to see you, Sir, at my house, and we have very great need of you.

SGAN. (*In a physician's gown with a very pointed cap*). Hippocrates says . . . that we should both put our hats on.

GER. Hippocrates says that?

SGAN. Yes.

GER. In which chapter, if you please?

SGAN. In his chapter . . . on hats.

GER. Since Hippocrates says so, we must obey.

SGAN. Doctor, having heard of the marvellous things . . .

GER. To whom are you speaking, pray?

SGAN. To you.

GER. I am not a physician

SGAN. You are not a physician?

GER. Indeed I am not.

its principal towns Dreux, Chartres, and Ch teaudun. Rabelais, in his *Gargantua*, Book I., Chapter 16, relates how the huge mare on which Gargantua rode destroyed the ox-flies of the Beauce with her enormous tail, "and felled everywhere the wood with as much ease, as the mower doth the grass, in such sort that never since hath there been there neither wood nor dorflies: for all the country was thereby reduced to a plain champagne field, which Gargantua took great pleasure to behold, and said to his company no more but this. 'Je trouve beau ce,' I find this pretty; whereupon that country hath been ever since that time called Beauce."

SGAN. Really?

GER. Really. (*Sganarelle takes a stick and thrashes G ron te*). Oh! Oh! Oh!

SGAN. Now you are a physician, I have never taken any other degree.

GER. (*To Val re*). What a devil of a fellow you have brought me here!

VAL. Did I not tell you that he was a funny sort of a physician?

GER. Yes; But I shall send him about his business with his fun.

LUC. Do not take any notice of it, Sir. It is only his joking.

GER. The joking does not suit me.

SGAN. Sir; I beg your pardon for the liberty I have taken.

GER. I am your humble servant, Sir.

SGAN. I am sorry . . .

GER. It is nothing.

SGAN. For the cudgelling I . . .

GER. There is no harm done.

SGAN. Which I have had the honour to give you.

GER. Do not say any more about it, Sir. I have a daughter who is suffering from a strange complaint.

SGAN. I am delighted, Sir, that your daughter has need of my skill; and I wish, with all my heart, that you stood in the same need of it, you and all your family, in order to show you my wish to serve you.

GER. I am obliged to you for these kind feelings.

SGAN. I assure you that I am speaking from my very heart.

GER. You really do me too much honour.

SGAN. What is your daughter's name?

GER. Lucinde.

SGAN. Lucinde! Ah! a pretty name to physic! Lucinde!²³

GER. I will just see what she is doing.

SGAN. Who is that tall woman?

GER. She is my baby's nurse.

²³ Not unlikely this was an allusion to the Juno Lucinda.

SCENE IV.—SGANARELLE, JACQUELINE, LUCAS.

SGAN. (*Aside*). Zounds, that is a fine piece of household furniture. (*Aloud*). Ah, nurse! Charming nurse! my physic is the very humble slave of your nurseship, and I should like to be the fortunate little nursling to suck the milk of your good graces. (*He puts his hand on her bosom*). All my nostrums, all my skill, all my cleverness, is at your service; and . . .

LUC. By your leave, Mr. Doctor; leave my wife alone, I pray you.

SGAN. What! is she your wife?

LUC. Yes.

SGAN. Oh! indeed! I did not know that, but I am very glad of it for the love of both. (*He pretends to embrace Lucas, but embraces the nurse.*

LUC. (*Pulling Sganarelle away, and placing himself between him and his wife*). Gently, if you please.

SGAN. I assure you that I am delighted that you should be united together. I congratulate her upon having such a husband as you; and I congratulate you upon having a wife so handsome, so discreet, and so well-shaped as she is. (*He pretends once more to embrace Lucas, who holds out his arms, he slips under them and embraces the nurse.*

LUC. (*Pulling him away again*). Do not pay so many compliments, I beg of you.

SGAN. Shall I not rejoice with you about such a lovely harmony?

LUC. With me as much as you like; but a truce to compliments with my wife.

SGAN. I have both your happiness equally at heart; and if I embrace you to show my delight in you, I embrace her to show my delight in her. (*Same by-play*).

LUC. (*Pulling him away for the third time*). Odds boddikins, Mr. Doctor, what vagaries!

SCENE V.—GÉRONTE, SGANARELLE, LUCAS, JACQUELINE.

GER. My daughter will be here directly, Sir.

SGAN. I am awaiting her, Sir, with all my physic.

GER. Where is it?

SGAN. (*Touching his forehead*). In there.

GER. That is good.

SGAN. But as I feel much interested in your family, I should like to test the milk of your nurse, and examine her breasts. (*He draws close to Jacqueline*).

LUC. (*Pulling him away, and swinging him round*). Nothing of the sort, nothing of the sort. I do not wish it.

SGAN. It is the physician's duty to see the breasts of the nurse.

LUC. Duty or no duty, I will not have it.

SGAN. Have you the audacity to contradict a physician? Out with you.

LUC. I do not care a straw about a physician.

SGAN. (*Looking askance at him*). I will give you a fever.

JACQ. (*Taking Lucas by the arm, and swinging him round also*). Get out of the way. Am I not big enough to take my own part, if he does anything to me which he ought not to do?

LUC. I will not have him touch you, I will not.

SGAN. For shame you rascal, to be jealous of your wife.

GER. Here comes my daughter.

SCENE VI.—LUCINDE, GÉRONTE, SGANARELLE, VALÈRE,
LUCAS, JACQUELINE.

SGAN. Is this the patient?

GER. Yes I have but one daughter; and I would never get over it if she were to die.

SGAN. Do not let her do anything of the kind. She must not die without a prescription of the physician.²⁴

GER. A chair here!

SGAN. (*Seated between G ron te and Lucinde*). This is not at all an unpleasant patient, and I am of opinion that she would not be at all amiss for a man in very good health.

GER. You have made her laugh, Sir.

SGAN. So much the better. It is the best sign in the world when a physician makes the patient laugh. (*To*

²⁴ G ron te and Sganarelle's remarks are also found slightly altered in Moli re's *The flying Physician*, one of his early farces.

Lucinde). Well, what is the matter? What ails you? What is it you feel?

LUC. (*Replies by motions, by putting her hand to her mouth, her head, and under her chin*). Ha, hi, ho, ha!

SGAN. What do you say?

LUC. (*Continues the same motions*). Ha, hi, ho, ha, ha, hi, ho!

SGAN. What is that?

LUC. Ha, hi, ho!

SGAN. (*Imitating her*). Ha, hi, ho, ha, ha! I do not understand you. What sort of language do you call that?

GER. That is just where her complaint lies, Sir. She has become dumb, without our having been able till now to discover the cause. This accident has obliged us to postpone her marriage.

SGAN. And why so?

GER. He whom she is going to marry wishes to wait for her recovery to conclude the marriage.

SGAN. And who is this fool that does not want his wife to be dumb? Would to Heaven that mine had that complaint! I should take particular care not to have her cured.

GER. To the point, Sir. We beseech you to use all your skill to cure her of this affliction.

SGAN. Do not make yourself uneasy. But tell me, does this pain oppress her much?

GER. Yes, Sir.

SGAN. So much the better. Is the suffering very acute?

GER. Very acute.

SGAN. That is right. Does she go to . . . you know where?

GER. Yes.

SGAN. Freely?

GER. That I know nothing about.

SGAN. Is the matter healthy?

GER. I do not understand these things.

SGAN. (*Turning to the patient*). Give me your hand. (*To Géronte*). The pulse tells me that your daughter is dumb.

GER. Sir, that is what is the matter with her; ah! yes, you have found it out at the first touch.

SGAN. Of course !

JACQ. See how he has guessed her complaint.

SGAN. We great physicians, we know matters at once. An ignoramus would have been nonplussed, and would have told you: it is this, that, or the other; but I hit the nail on the head from the very first, and I tell you that your daughter is dumb.

GER. Yes; but I should like you to tell me whence it arises.

SGAN. Nothing is easier; it arises from loss of speech.

GER. Very good. But the reason of her having lost her speech, pray?

SGAN. Our best authorities will tell you that it is because there is an impediment in the action of her tongue.

GER. But, once more, your opinion upon this impediment in the action of her tongue.

SGAN. Aristotle on this subject says . . . a great many clever things.

GER. I dare say.

SGAN. Ah! He was a great man!

GER. No doubt.

SGAN. Yes, a very great man. (*Holding out his arm, and putting a finger of the other hand in the bend*). A man who was, by this, much greater than I. But to come back to our argument: I am of opinion that this impediment in the action of her tongue is caused by certain humours, which among us learned men, we call peccant humours; peccant—that is to say . . . peccant humours; inasmuch as the vapours formed by the exhalations of the influences which rise in the very region of diseases, coming, . . . as we may say to . . . Do you understand Latin?

GER. Not in the least.

SGAN. (*Suddenly rising*). You do not understand Latin?

GER. No.

SGAN. (*Assuming various comic attitudes*). *Cabricias arci thuram, catalamus, singulariter, nominativo, hæc musa, the muse, bonus, bona, bonum. Deus sanctus, est-ne oratio latinas? Etiam, Yes. Quare? Why. Quia*

*substantivo et adjectivum, concordat in generi, numerum, et casus.*²⁵

GER. Ah ! Why did I not study ?

JACQ. What a clever man !

LUC. Yes, it is so beautiful that I do not understand a word of it.

SGAN. Thus these vapours which I speak of, passing from the left side, where the liver is, to the right side, where we find the heart, it so happens that the lungs, which in Latin we call *armyan*, having communication with the brain, which in Greek we style *nasmus*, by means of the *vena cava*, which in Hebrew, is termed *cubile*,²⁶ meet in their course the said vapours, which fill the ventricles of the omoplate ; and because the said vapours . . . now understand well this argument, pray . . . and because these said vapours are endowed with a certain malignity . . . listen well to this, I beseech you.

GER. Yes.

SGAN. Are endowed with a certain malignity which is caused . . . pay attention here, if you please.

GER. I do.

SGAN. Which is caused by the acridity of these humours engendered in the concavity of the diaphragm, it happens that these vapours. . . . *Ossabandus, nequeis, nequer, potarinum, puiipsa milus.*²⁷ That is exactly the reason that your daughter is dumb.

JACQ. Ah ! How well this gentleman explains all this.

LUC. Why does not my tongue wag as well as his ?

GER. It is undoubtedly impossible to argue better. There is but one thing that I cannot exactly make out : that is the whereabouts of the liver and the heart. It ap-

²⁵ The first four words of Sganarelle's address are words of Molière's coining, and belong to no language ; the rest is a truncated quotation of the following passage from the old Latin grammar of Despautère : *Deus sanctus, est-ne oratio latina ? Etiam. Quare ? Quia substantivum et adjectivum concordant in genere, numero, casu.* In pronouncing the word *casus*, which means "case," and "fall," the actor, who plays the part of Sganarelle, upsets his chair whilst sitting down, and falls on the floor, according to tradition.

²⁶ *Armyan* and *Nasmus* belong to no language ; *cubile* is the Latin for bed or den.

²⁷ These words belong to no language.

pears to me that you place them differently from what they are; that the heart is on the left side, and the liver on the right.

SGAN. Yes; this was so formerly; but we have changed all that, and we now-a-days practise the medical art on an entirely new system.

GER. I did not know that, and I pray you pardon my ignorance.

SGAN. There is no harm done; and you are not obliged to be so clever as we are.

GER. Certainly not. But what think you, Sir, ought to be done for this complaint?

SGAN. What do I think ought to be done?

GER. Yes.

SGAN. My advice is to put her to bed again, and make her, as a remedy, take plenty of bread soaked in wine.

GER. Why so, sir?

SGAN. Because there is in bread and wine mixed together a sympathetic virtue which produces speech. Do you not see that they give nothing else to parrots, and that, by eating it, they learn to speak?

GER. That is true. Oh! the great man! Quick, plenty of bread and wine.

SGAN. I shall come back to-night to see how the patient is getting on.

SCENE VII.—GÉRONTE, SGANARELLE, JACQUELINE.

SGAN. (*To Jacqueline*). Stop a little you. (*To Géronte*). Sir, I must give some medicine to your nurse.

JACQ. To me, Sir? I am as well as can be.

SGAN. So much the worse, nurse, so much the worse. This excess of health is dangerous, and it would not be amiss to bleed you a little gently, and to administer some little soothing injection.

GER. But, my dear Sir, that is a method which I cannot understand. Why bleed folks when they are not ill?

SGAN. It does not matter, the method is salutary; and as we drink for the thirst to come, so must we bleed for the disease to come.²⁸

²⁸ This is really no joke. It was the custom in Molière's time to swallow a certain amount of physic as a matter of precaution, and in case of future maladies,

JACQ. (*Going*). I do not care a fig for all this, and I will not have my body made an apothecary's shop.

SGAN. You object to my remedies ; but we shall know how to bring you to reason.

SCENE VIII.—GÉRONTE, SGANARELLE.

SGAN. I wish you good day.

GER. Stay a moment, if you please.

SGAN. What are you going to do ?

GER. Give you your fee, sir.

SGAN. (*Putting his hands behind him, from under his gown, while G ron te opens his purse*). I shall not accept it, Sir.

GER. Sir.

SGAN. Not at all.

GER. One moment.

SGAN. On no consideration.

GER. Pray !

SGAN. You are jesting.

GER. That is settled.

SGAN. I shall do nothing of the kind.

GER. What !

SGAN. I do not practise for money's sake.²⁹

GER. I am convinced of that.

SGAN. (*After having taken the money*). Are they good weight ?

GER. Yes, Sir.

SGAN. I am not a mercenary physician.

GER. I am well aware of it.

SGAN. I am not actuated by interest.

GER. I do not for a moment think so.

SGAN. (*Alone, looking at the money he has received*).

²⁹ This is taken from Rabelais' *Pantagruel*, Book III., Chapter 34, when Panurge, having taken counsel with the physician Rondibilis, clapped into his hand, without the speaking of so much as one word, four rose nobles. "Rondibilis did shut his fist upon them right kindly; yet, as if it had displeased him to make acceptance of such golden presents, he in a start as if he had been wroth, said, He, he, he, he, he, there was no need of anything, I thank you nevertheless. From wicked folks I never get enough, and from honest people I refuse nothing. I shall be always, Sir, at your command. Provided that I pay you well, quoth Panurge. That, quoth Rondibilis, is understood."

Upon my word, this does not promise badly ; and provided . . .

SCENE IX.—LÉANDRE, SGANARELLE.

LEAN. I have been waiting some time for you, Sir, and I have come to beg your assistance.

SGAN. (*Feeling his pulse*). That is a very bad pulse.

LEAN. I am not ill, Sir ; and it is not for that I am come to you.

SGAN. If you are not ill, why the devil do you not tell me so ?

LEAN. No. To tell you the matter in a few words, my name is Léandre. I am in love with Lucinde to whom you have just paid a visit ; and as all access to her is denied to me, through the ill-temper of her father, I venture to beseech you to serve me in my love affair, and to assist me in a stratagem that I have invented, so as to say a few words to her, on which my whole life and happiness absolutely depend.

SGAN. (*In apparent anger*). Whom do you take me for ? How dare you address yourself to me to assist you in your love affair, and to wish me to lower the dignity of a physician by an affair of that kind !

LEAN. Do not make a noise, Sir.

SGAN. (*Driving him back*). I will make a noise. You are an impertinent fellow.

LEAN. Ah ! gently, Sir.

SGAN. An ill-mannered jackanapes.

LEAN. Pray !

SGAN. I will teach you that I am not the kind of man you take me for, and that it is the greatest insolence . . .

LEAN. (*Taking out a purse*). Sir . . .

SGAN. To wish to employ me . . . (*taking the purse*). I am not speaking about you, for you are a gentleman ; and I should be delighted to be of any use to you ; but there are certain impertinent people in this world who take folks for what they are not ; and I tell you candidly that this puts me in a passion.

LEAN. I ask your pardon, Sir, for the liberty I have . . .

SGAN. You are jesting. What is the affair in question ?

LEAN. You must know then, Sir, that this disease which

you wish to cure is a feigned complaint. The physicians have argued about it, as they ought to do, and they have not failed to give it as their opinion,—this one, that it arose from the brain; that one, from the intestines; another, from the spleen; another, again, from the liver; but the fact is that love is its real cause, and that Lucinde has only invented this illness in order to free herself from a marriage with which she has been harassed. But for fear that we may be seen together, let us retire; and I will tell you as we go along, what I wish you to do.

SGAN. Come along, then, Sir. You have inspired me with an inconceivable interest in your love; and if all my medical science does not fail me, the patient shall either die or be yours.

ACT III.

(The scene represents a spot near G ron te's house.)

SCENE I.—L ANDRE, SGANARELLE.

LEAN. I think that I am not at all badly got up for an apothecary; and as her father has scarcely ever seen me, this change of dress and wig is likely enough, I think, to disguise me.

SGAN. There is no doubt of it.

LEAN. Only I should like to know five or six big medical words to leaven my conversation with, and to give me the air of a learned man.

SGAN. Go along, go along; it is not at all necessary. The dress is sufficient; and I know no more about it than you do.

LEAN. How is that!

SGAN. The devil take me if I understand anything about medicine! You are a gentleman, and I do not mind confiding in you, as you have confided in me.

LEAN. What! Then you are not really . . .

SGAN. No, I tell you. They have made me a physician in spite of my teeth. I have never attempted to be so learned as that; and all my studies did not go farther than the lowest class at school. I do not know how the

idea has come to them ; but when I saw that in spite of every thing they would have it that I was a physician, I made up my mind to be so at somebody's expense. You would not believe, however, how this error has spread, and how everyone is possessed, and believes me to be a learned man. They come seeking me on all sides ; and if things go on in this way, I am resolved to stick to the profession all my life. I find that it is the best trade of all ; for, whether we manage well or ill, we are paid just the same. Bad workmanship never recoils on us ; and we cut the material we have to work with pretty much as we like. A shoemaker, in making a pair of shoes, cannot spoil a scrap of leather without having to bear the loss ; but in our business we may spoil a man without its costing us a farthing. The blunders are never put down to us, and it is always the fault of the fellow who dies. The best of this profession is, that there is the greatest honesty and discretion among the dead ; for you never find them complain of the physician who has killed them.

LEAN. It is true that the dead are very honourable in that respect.

SGAN. (*Seeing some people advancing towards him*). There come some people, who seem anxious to consult me. (*To Léandre*). Go and wait for me near the house of your lady-love.

SCENE II.—THIBAUT, PERRIN, SGANARELLE.

THIB. Sir, we come to look for you, my son Perrin and myself.³⁰

SGAN. What is the matter ?

THIB. His poor mother, whose name is Perrette, has been on a bed of sickness for the last six months.

SGAN. (*Holding out his hand as if to receive money*). What would you have me do to her ?

THIB. I would like you to give me some little doctor's stuff to cure her.

SGAN. We must first see what is the matter with her.

THIB. She is ill with the hypocrisy, Sir.

³⁰ In the original, Thibaut speaks like a peasant ; as *Mounsie, je venons vous charcher, mon fils Perrin et moi.*

SGAN. With the hypocrisy?

THIB. Yes; I mean she is swollen everywhere. They say that there is a lot of seriousness in her inside, and that her liver, her belly, or her spleen, as you would call it, instead of making blood makes nothing but water. She has, every other day, the quotidian fever, with lassitude and pains in the muscles of her legs. We can hear in her throat phlegms that are ready to choke her, and she is often taken with syncoles and conversions, so that we think she is going off the hooks. We have got in our village an apothecary—with respect be it said—who has given her, I do not know how much stuff; and it has cost me more than a dozen good crowns in clysters, saving your presence, in apostumes which he has made her swallow, in infections of hyacinth, and in cordial potions. But all this, as people say, was nothing but an ointment of fiddle-faddle. He wanted to give her a certain drug called amelite wine; but I was downright afraid that this would send her to the other world altogether; because they tell me that those big physicians kill, I do not know how many, with that new-fangled notion.³¹

SGAN. (*Still holding out his hand, and moving it about to show that he wants money*). Let us come to the point, friend, let us come to the point.

THIB. The point is, Sir, that we have come to beg of you to tell us what we must do.

SGAN. I do not understand you at all.

PER. My mother is ill, Sir, and here are two crowns which we have brought you to give us some stuff.

SGAN. Ah! you I do understand. There is a lad who speaks clearly, and explains himself as he should. You say that your mother is ill with the dropsy; that she is swollen all over her body; that she has a fever, with pains in the legs; that she sometimes is taken with syncofes and convulsions, that is to say with fainting fits.

PER. Indeed, Sir! that is just it.

³¹ Of course, Thibaut mispronounces nearly every word, and also the medical words. Sganarelle corrects him a little further on. For emetic wine, which he calls "amelite wine," see page 104, note 16.

SGAN. I understand you at once. Your father does not know what he says. And now you ask me for a remedy?

PER. Yes, sir.

SGAN. A remedy to cure her?

PER. That is just what I mean.

SGAN. Take this then. It is a piece of cheese which you must make her take.

PER. A piece of cheese, Sir?

SGAN. Yes; it is a kind of prepared cheese, in which there is gold, coral, and pearls, and a great many other precious things.

PER. I am very much obliged to you, Sir, and I shall go and make her take it directly.

SGAN. Go, and if she dies, do not fail to bury her in the best style you can.

SCENE III.—(*The Scene changes, and represents, as in the Second Act, a room in Gêronte's house*)—JACQUELINE, SGANARELLE, LUCAS, *at the far end of the stage*.

SGAN. Here is the pretty nurse. Ah! you darling nurse, I am delighted at this meeting; and the sight of you is like rhubarb, cassia, and senna to me, which purges all melancholy from my mind.

JACQ. Upon my word, Mr. Physician, it is no good talking to me in that style, and I do not understand your Latin at all.

SGAN. Get ill, nurse, I beg of you; get ill for my sake. I shall have all the pleasure in the world of curing you.

JACQ. I am your humble servant; I would much rather not be cured.

SGAN. How I grieve for you, beautiful nurse, in having such a jealous and troublesome husband.

JACQ. What am I to do, Sir? It is as a penance for my sins; and where the goat is tied down she must browse.

SGAN. What! Such a clod-hopper as that! a fellow who is always watching you, and will let no one speak to you!

JACQ. Alas! you have seen nothing yet; and that is only a small sample of his bad temper.

SGAN. Is it possible? and can a man have so mean a spirit as to ill-use a woman like you? Ah! I know some, sweet nurse, and who are not very far off, who would only be too glad to kiss your little feet! Why should such a handsome woman have fallen into such hands! and a mere animal, a brute, a stupid, a fool . . . Excuse me, nurse, for speaking in that way of your husband.

JACQ. Oh! Sir, I know full well that he deserves all these names.

SGAN. Undoubtedly, nurse, he deserves them; and he also deserves that you should plant something on his head to punish him for his suspicions.

JACQ. It is true enough that if I had not his interest so much at heart, he would drive me to do some strange things.

SGAN. Indeed it would just serve him right if you were to revenge yourself upon him with some one. The fellow richly deserves it all, I tell you, and if I were fortunate enough, fair nurse, to be chosen by you . . .

(While Sganarelle is holding out his arms to embrace Jacqueline, Lucas passes his head under them, and comes between the two. Sganarelle and Jacqueline stare at Lucas, and depart on opposite sides, but the doctor does so in a very comic manner).

SCENE IV.—GÉRONTE, LUCAS.

GER. I say, Lucas, have not you seen our physician here?

LUC. Indeed I have seen him, by all the devils, and my wife too.

GER. Where can he be?

LUC. I do not know; but I wish he were at the devil.

GER. Just go and see what my daughter is doing.

SCENE V.—SGANarelle, Léandre, GÉRONTE.

GER. I was just inquiring after you, Sir.

SGAN. I have just been amusing myself in your court with expelling the superfluity of drink. How is the patient?

GER. Somewhat worse since your remedy.

SGAN. So much the better; it shows that it takes effect.

GER. Yes; but while it is taking effect, I am afraid it will choke her.

SGAN. Do not make yourself uneasy; I have some remedies that will make it all right! and I will wait until she is at death's door.

GER. (*Pointing to Léandre*). Who is this man that is with you?

SGAN. (*Intimates by motions of his hands that it is an apothecary*). It is. . . .

GER. What?

SGAN. He who . . .

GER. Oh!

SGAN. Who

GER. I understand.

SGAN. Your daughter will want him.

SCENE VI.—LUCINDE, GÉRONTE, LÉANDRE, JACQUELINE, SGANARELLE.

JACQ. Here is your daughter, Sir, who wishes to stretch her limbs a little.

SGAN. That will do her good. Go to her, Mr. Apothecary, and feel her pulse, so that I may consult with you presently about her complaint. (*At this point he draws Gêronte to one end of the stage, and putting one arm upon his shoulder, he places his hand under his chin, with which he makes him turn towards him, each time that Gêronte wants to look at what is passing between his daughter and the apothecary, while he holds the following discourse with him*). Sir, it is a great and subtle question among physicians to know whether women or men are more easily cured. I pray you to listen to this, if you please. Some say "no," others say "yes;" I say both "yes" and "no;" inasmuch as the incongruity of the opaque humours, which are found in the natural temperament of women, causes the brutal part to struggle for the mastery over the sensitive,³² we find that the conflict of their opinion depends on the oblique motion of the circle of the moon; and as the sun, which darts its beams on the concavity of the earth, meets . . .

³² Compare Gros René's Speech in *The Love Tiff*, Act iv., Scene ii., Vol. I., page 115.

LUC. (*To Léandre*). No; I am not at all likely to change my feelings.

GER. Hark! my daughter speaks! O, great virtue of the remedy! O, excellent physician! How deeply am I obliged to you, Sir, for this marvellous cure! And what can I do for you after such a service?

SGAN. (*Strutting about the stage, fanning himself with his hat*). This case has given me some trouble.

LUC. Yes, father, I have recovered my speech; but I have recovered it to tell you that I will never have any other husband than Léandre, and that it is in vain for you to wish to give me to Horace.

GER. But . . .

LUC. Nothing will shake the resolution I have taken.

GER. What . . .

LUC. All your fine arguments will be in vain

GER. If . . .

LUC. All you talking will be of no use.

GER. I . . .

LUC. I have made up my mind about the matter.

GER. But . . .

LUC. No paternal authority can compel me to marry against my will.

GER. I have . . .

LUC. You may try as much as you like.

GER. It . . .

LUC. My heart cannot submit to this tyranny.

GER. The . . .

LUC. And I will sooner go into a convent than marry a man I do not love.

GER. But . . .

LUC. (*In a loud voice*). No. By no means. It is of no use. You waste your time. I shall do nothing of the kind. I am fully determined.

GER. Ah! what a torrent of words! One cannot hold out against it. (*To Sganarelle*). I beseech you, Sir, to make her dumb again.

SGAN. That is impossible. All that I can do in your behalf is to make you deaf, if you like.

GER. I thank you. (*To Lucinde*). Do you think . . .

LUC. No ; all your reasoning will not have the slightest effect upon me.

GER. You shall marry Horace this very evening.

LUC. I would sooner marry death itself.

SCAN. (*To G ron te*). Stop, for Heaven's sake ! stop. Let me doctor this matter ; it is a disease that has got hold of her, and I know the remedy to apply to it.

GER. Is it possible, indeed, Sir, that you can cure this disease of the mind also ?

SCAN. Yes ; let me manage it. I have remedies for every thing ; and our apothecary will serve us capitally for this cure. (*To L andre*). A word with you. You perceive that the passion she has for this L andre is altogether against the wishes of the father ; that there is no time to lose ; that the humours are very acrimonious ; and that it becomes necessary to find speedily a remedy for this complaint, which may get worse by delay. As for myself, I see but one, which is a dose of purgative flight, mixed, as it should be, with two drachms of matrimonium, made up into pills. She may, perhaps, make some difficulty about taking this remedy ; but as you are a clever man in your profession, you must induce her to consent to it, and make her swallow the thing as best you can. Go and take a little turn in the garden with her to prepare the humours, while I converse here with her father ; but, above all, lose not a moment. Apply the remedy quick ! apply the specific !

SCENE VII.—G RONTE, SCANARELLE.

GER. What drugs are those you have just mentioned, Sir ? It seems to me that I never heard of them before.

SCAN. They are drugs which are used only in urgent cases.

GER. Did you ever see such insolence as hers ?

SCAN. Daughters are a little headstrong at times.

GER. You would not believe how she is infatuated with this L andre.

SCAN. The heat of the blood produces those things in young people.

GER. As for me, the moment I discovered the violence

of this passion, I took care to keep my daughter under lock and key.

SGAN. You have acted wisely.

GER. And I have prevented the slightest communication between them.

SGAN. Just so.

GER. They would have committed some folly, if they had been permitted to see each other.

SGAN. Undoubtedly.

GER. And I think she would have been the girl to run away with him.

SGAN. You have argued very prudently.

GER. I was informed, that he tried every means to get speech of her.

SGAN. The rascal !

GER. But he will waste his time.

SGAN. Aye ! Aye !

GER. And I will effectually prevent him from seeing her.

SGAN. He has no fool to deal with, and you know some tricks of which he is ignorant. One must get up very early to catch you asleep.

SCENE VIII.—LUCAS, GÉRONTE, SGANARELLE.

LUC. Odds bobs ! Sir, here is a pretty to do. Your daughter has fled with her Léandre. It was he that played the apothecary, and this is the physician who has performed this nice operation.

GER. What ! to murder me in this manner ! Quick, fetch a magistrate, and take care that he does not get away. Ah villain ! I will have you punished by the law.

LUC. I am afraid, Mister Doctor, that you will be hanged.³³ Do not stir a step, I tell you.

SCENE IX.—MARTINE, SGANARELLE, LUCAS.

MART. (To LUCAS) Good gracious ! what a difficulty I have had to find this place ! Just tell me what has become of the physician I recommended to you ?

³³ A nearly similar saying is also used by Georgibus in one of Molière's early farces, *The Flying Physician*.

LUC. Here he is ; just going to be hanged.

MART. What ! my husband hanged ! Alas, and for what ?

LUC. He has helped some one to run away with master's daughter.

MART. Alas, my dear husband, is it true that you are going to be hanged ?

SGAN. Judge for yourself. Ah !

MART. And must you be made an end of in the presence of such a crowd.

SGAN. What am I to do ?

MART. If you had only finished cutting our wood, I should be somewhat consoled.

SGAN. Leave me, you break my heart.

MART. No, I will remain to encourage you to die ; and I will not leave you until I have seen you hanged.

SGAN. Ah !

SCENE X.—GÉRONTE, SGANARELLE, MARTINE.

GER. (*To Sganarelle*). The magistrate will be here directly, and we shall put you in a place of safety where they will be answerable for you.

SGAN. (*On his knees, hat in hand*). Alas ! will not a few strokes with a cudgel do instead ?

GER. No, no ; the law shall decide. But what do I see ?

SCENE XI.—GÉRONTE, LÉANDRE, LUCINDE, SGANARELLE, LUCAS, MARTINE.

LEAN. Sir, I appear before you as Léandre, and am come to restore Lucinde to your authority. We intended to run away, and get married ; but this design has given way to a more honorable proceeding. I will not presume to steal away your daughter, and it is from your hands alone that I will obtain her. I must at the same time acquaint you, that I have just now received some letters informing me of the death of my uncle, and that he has left me heir to all his property.

GER. Really, Sir, your virtue is worthy of my utmost consideration, and I give you my daughter with the greatest pleasure in the world.

SGAN. (*Aside*). The physician has had a narrow escape !

MART. Since you are not going to be hanged, you may thank me for being a physician ; for I have procured you this honour.

SGAN. Yes, it is you who procured me, I do not know how many thwacks with a cudgel.

LEAN. (*To Sganarelle*). The result has proved too happy to harbour any resentment.

SGAN. Be it so. (*To Martine*). I forgive you the blows on account of the dignity to which you have elevated me ; but prepare yourself henceforth to behave with great respect towards a man of my consequence ; and consider that the anger of a physician is more to be dreaded than people imagine.

MÉLICERTE.
COMEDIE PASTORALE HÉROÏQUE.

MÉLICERTE.
A HEROIC PASTORAL IN TWO ACTS.

(*THE ORIGINAL IN VERSE.*)

DECEMBER 2ND, 1666.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

ON the 1st of December, 1666, the troupe of Molière set out for Saint-Germain-en-Laye, where it was employed, as well as the troupe of the hôtel de Bourgogne, and the Italian and Spanish comedians, in the *Ballet des Muses*, which inaugurated the renewal of the court-festivals, interrupted for nearly a year through the death of the Queen-mother. The celebrated musician, Lulli, composed the music for the ballet; whilst the King, Madame,¹ Mesdemoiselles de la Vallière and de la Mothe, Mesdames de Montespan and de Ludre—four ladies whom the King delighted to honour—and the principal personages of the court, took an active part in the entries,² the dancing, and the mythological sports.

Molière was entrusted with the task of writing a comedy for these entertainments, and he chose for his subject a similar one to the history of Florizel and Perdita, in Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale*. It is said that Molière owed his episode of *Mélicerte* to that part of Mademoiselle de Scudéry's novel *Cyrus*, which relates the love-scenes between Sésostris and Timarète, a young shepherd and shepherdess, who became enamoured of each other, and are afterwards proved to be of noble origin. But the charm of his writing, the exquisite delicacy of the sentiment, and the freshness of the pastoral scenes, cause us to regret that Molière wrote only the two first acts of this play, and never finished it. Those who wish to study Molière, and not to leave any of his writings neglected, will discover in some of his most slighted plays, such as *Don Garcia of Navarre*, *The Princess of Elis*, *Mélicerte*, *The Magnificent Lovers*, an under-current of sentimentality, sometimes a little too courtly, at other times of rather too pastoral and lackadaisical a flavour, but always bearing the impress of genuine, real, heartfelt emotion, worthy of being carefully observed, as perhaps a new trait in Molière's character.

Mélicerte was acted on the 2d of December, 1666, and young Michel Boiron, better known as Baron, played in it the chief character of Myrtil. Tradition states, that, during the rehearsals, the wife of Molière, jealous of the influence of the young actor—for he was only thirteen years old—over the heart of her husband, boxed Baron's ears; at which the latter

¹ See Vol. I., page 340, note 1.

² See Vol. I., page xxx., note 12.

was so offended that he refused to play. The matter was arranged with great difficulty; but immediately after *Mélicerte* had been performed, Baron asked Louis XIV.'s permission to leave Molière's troupe, and for three years remained in the provinces. The scandalous gossip of those times says that Mad. Molière's hatred of Baron changed afterwards into a warmer sentiment, which he returned.

This play was not published during Molière's lifetime, but sixteen years after his death by La Grange and Vinot. (See Introductory Notice to *The Impromptu of Versailles*, Vol. I.). In 1699, seventeen years after it had been published, Guérin, a son of the husband of Molière's widow, and who professed a great admiration for Molière, altered *Mélicerte* partly, changed the metre into an irregular one, made Myrtil give to Mélicerte a nosegay instead of a bird, and added an entire third act. But in spite of the music of Lalande and the protection of the Princess of Conti, the piece had no success.

Molière and his troupe remained at Saint Germain-en-Laye from the 1st of December, 1666, until the 25th of February, 1667, and received from the King, for the time spent in his pleasures, two years of their pension.³ During that time, the dramatist produced *Mélicerte*, the *Pastorale Comique* and *The Sicilian*. The *Ballet des Muses* was arranged by Benserade, the official manager of nearly all the courtly entertainments, who wrote also the verses or *récits*; ⁴ but as this *Ballet* lasted for nearly three months, it must have been often changed, for variety is one of the necessities of courtly amusements. It opened with Mnemosyne, the goddess of memory, who, remembering the great heroes of antiquity, wished to see the august prince who had such a glorious reputation, and who caused all arts to flourish in his dominions. She was accompanied by the nine Muses who sang, and by seven arts, Urania, and seven planets, represented by dancers in brilliant dresses, formed the first entry. The second entry was Pyramus and Thisbe. Pyramus was acted by the Count of Armagnac, generally called Monsieur le Grand, because he was "Grand Écuyer" (Master of the horse), and Thisbe by the Marquis de Mirepoix, who we sincerely trust played better than Nick Bottom, the weaver, and Francis Flute, the bellows-mender. The third entry was Thalia and Mélicerte,⁵ represented by Molière and his troupe, "of all our poets," says the official description, "the one who, in this kind of writing, may with the greatest justice be compared to the ancients." The fourth entry was in honour of Euterpe, a pastoral muse; eight shepherds and eight shepherdesses sang some verses in praise of the power of Love; four other shepherds and four other shepherdesses danced, whilst the sixteen were singing. Amongst the dancers were Louis XIV. and the Marquis de Villeroy, and amongst the *danseuses* Madame, Madame de Montespan, Mademoiselle de La Vallière and Mademoiselle de Toussi. The fifth entry, in honour of Clio, the muse of history, was a ballet representing the battle between Alexander and Porus. I cannot imagine that the battle was well represented; for the official description gives only the

³ The munificence displayed by Louis XIV. to Molière and his troupe has been too much extolled. Since the year 1665, they received 6,000 livres, and during the last two years of Molière's life, 7,000 livres; but the troupe of the hotel de Bourgogne received 12,000 livres, and the Italian troupe 15,000 livres yearly.

⁴ See Vol. I., page xxx., note 12.

⁵ There is a little doubt whether Mélicerte or the *Pastorale Comique* was represented in the third entry; most probably the former.

names of five Greeks and the same number of Indians, while each army has one drummer and two flute players. The sixth entry in honour of Caliope, "the mother of fine verses," was a little comedy, called *The Poets*, acted by the troupe of the hôtel de Bourgogne, when a Spanish Masca-, rade was represented, in which the King and several noblemen, as well as Madame, Madame de Montespan, Mademoiselle de La Vallière, and several noble ladies, danced. There were also four Spaniards who played on the harp and guitar, the same number who sang, and four Spanish ladies who sang also; and if these Spanish actors were—as is most likely—the comedians patronised by the Queen Maria Theresa, herself a Spanish princess, and on the point of giving birth to a child,⁶ it is, to say the least of it, singular, that they should have sung in her presence, as well as in that of the King's favourites, verses which say, "the most charming youth, without love, is nothing; some little tenderness increases all charms. None can refrain from the power of love, but if my heart is tender, it is not so for you." In the seventh entry, Orpheus, sung by Lulli, was represented as bewailing and feeling the influence of love; a nymph and eight Thracians are also there. The eighth entry represented Erato, "who, above all others, is invoked in love," and six lovers taken from the most famous novels; amongst others Louis XIV., came forward as Cyrus. The ninth entry was in honour of Polyhymnia, "whose power extends over eloquence and dialectics;" three Greek and three Roman orators are ridiculed by the same number of French and Italian actors. The tenth entry was in honour of Terpsichore, "to whom the invention of rustic song and dance is attributed;" four Fauns and four savage women dance, and a Satyr sings verses, of course in praise of Love. The eleventh entry consisted of the nine Muses and the nine daughters of Pierro vieing with each other in dancing, and all represented by noble ladies, amongst whom were Madame, Mademoiselle de La Vallière, Madame de Ludre, and Madame de Montespan. The twelfth entry was composed of three nymphs, who were umpires, of which the King was one. The last entry consisted of the Pierides resisting, and Monsieur Le Grand, as Jupiter, changing them into birds.

It will be seen that the *Grand Monarque* danced several times himself in the *Ballet des Muses*; he always liked dancing, and however much his early education may have been neglected, upon that point it left nothing to be desired. But to judge rightly how much dancing was esteemed at that time, we have but to look at what was paid to the King's different masters in 1660—he was then twenty-three years old. We find that the yearly salary of his dancing master was 2000 livres, of his drawing master 1500 livres, and of his writing master 300 livres, the same, in fact, as that of the scullions of the royal kitchen—perhaps a just retribution for neglect, for Louis XIV., wrote a royally bad hand all his lifetime, but was considered a first-rate dancer. He instituted in 1661, an *Académie royale de danse*, formed of thirteen dancing masters, who "shall have to remedy the disorders and confusion which the late wars have introduced in the aforesaid art," says the official preamble. This Academy enjoyed the same privileges as the *Académie de peinture et de sculpture*; and probably the dancing master of *The Citizen who apes the Nobleman*, was one of its members. The official *Gazette* always gave a minute and detailed report of the most trifling mythological or allegorical ballet danced at court, but never an analysis of any masterpiece of the French

⁶ This child, a girl, was born on the 2d of January, 1667.

stage. It continued to do this, even after the King no longer danced himself.⁷

⁷ It is generally stated that Louis XIV. never danced more in a ballet, after Racine had put the following words in the mouth of Burrhus in the tragedy of *Britannicus*, represented during the latter part of the year 1669. We see, however, that the King, according to the *Gazette*, represented Apollo and Neptune in a ballet, on the 9th of February, 1670; but after that time, he never more appeared in public. The lines are as follows:—

“ His greatest merit and his rarest virtue,
Is skilfully to guide his chariot's course,
To vie with others for unworthy prizes,
And to become a public sight in Rome.”

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MYRTIL, *in love with Mèlicerte.*

ACANTHE, *in love with Daphné.*

TYRÈNE, *in love with Eroxène.*

LYCARSIS, *herdsman, supposed father to Myrtil.*⁸

NICANDRE, *shepherd.*

MOPSE, *shepherd, supposed uncle to Mèlicerte.*

MÉLICERTE, *shepherdess.*

DAPHNÉ, *shepherdess.*

EROXÈNE, *shepherdess.*

CORINNE, *confidante of Mèlicerte.*

Scene.—THESSALY, IN THE VALLEY OF TEMPE.

⁸ This part was played by Molière himself.

MELICERTE.

(*MÉLICERTE*).¹

ACT I.

SCENE I.—DAPHNÉ, ÉROXÈNE, ACANTHE, TYRÈNE.

ACAN. Ah! charming Daphné!

TYR. Too lovely Eroxène!

DAPH. Leave me, Acanthe.

EROX. Do not follow me Tyrène.

ACAN. (*To Daphne*). Why do you drive me away?

TYR. (*To Eroxène*). Why do you fly from me?

DAPH. (*To Acanthe*). You please me most when far away.

EROX. (*To Tyrène*). I love to be where you are not.

ACAN. Why not cease this killing severity?

TYR. Why not cease to be so cruel?

DAPH. Why not cease your useless protestations?

EROX. Why not cease to bore me?

ACAN. I die with grief, unless you pity them.

TYR. Unless you succour me, my death is but too sure.

DAPH. Unless you go, I leave this place.

EROX. If you remain, I say good-bye.

ACAN. Well, be it so! to please you I will go.

TYR. When I am gone, I am sure you will be pleased.

ACAN. Generous Eroxène, vouchsafe, for pity's sake, to say a word or two to her in favour of my passion.

TYR. Obliging Daphné, speak to this inhuman creature, and learn whence proceeds so much hatred towards me.

SCENE II.—DAPHNÉ, ÉROXÈNE.

ÉROX. Acanthe has some merit, and loves you dearly. How is it that you treat him so harshly?

DAPH. Tyrène has much worth, and pines for your love. Whence comes it that, without pity, you behold him shedding tears?

ÉROX. Since I put the question first, it is but fair that you should answer before me.

DAPH. All Acanthe's attentions make no impression on me, because I care for some one else.

ÉROX. I treat Tyrène with harshness, because another is master of my heart.

DAPH. May I know this choice which you conceal?

ÉROX. Yes, if you tell me this secret of yours.

DAPH. I can easily satisfy your wish without telling you the name of him I love. I have an admirable portrait of him in my pocket, the work of Atis, that inimitable painter, so like him in every feature, that I am sure you will recognise him at a glance.

ÉROX. I can satisfy you by the same means, and repay your secret in the like coin. I also have a lovely portrait by this famous painter, of the object of my affections, so like him in every feature, and in his exceeding grace, that you will name him at first sight.

DAPH. The case which the painter has had made for me is exactly like yours.

ÉROX. It is true. They are exactly alike, and certainly Atis must have had them made together.

DAPH. Let us now, by means of these few tints, show each other the secret of our hearts.

ÉROX. Let us see who will soonest understand this language, and which work speaks most plainly.

DAPH. This is a droll mistake, and you have made a nice blunder: instead of your portrait, you have given me back my own.

ÉROX. Indeed I have; I do not know how I came to do it.

DAPH. Give it me. It is because you were dreaming.

EROX. What is the meaning of this? I believe we are joking with each other. You have made the same blunder as I have with the portraits.

DAPH. This is certainly enough to make one laugh. Give it me back again.

EROX. (*Placing the two portraits side by side*). This is the true way not to make a blunder.

DAPH. Is this an illusion of my preoccupied senses?

EROX. Is my mind affecting my eyes?

DAPH. Myrtil is shown to me in this work.

EROX. Of Myrtil's features I see the image.

DAPH. It is young Myrtil who has kindled my flame.

EROX. It is to young Myrtil that all my wishes tend.

DAPH. I came to-day to entreat you to tell him how his merits interest me in his lot.

EROX. I came to ask you to assist me in my affections; to help me to gain his heart.

DAPH. Is this affection with which he inspires you so powerful?

EROX. Is your love for him so violent?

DAPH. He could inflame the coldest heart; and his budding charms must delight everyone.

EROX. Not a nymph, but would esteem herself happy in loving him. Diana herself might without shame be enamoured of him.

DAPH. Nothing but his bright presence charms me now-a-days; and had I a hundred hearts, they should all be his.

EROX. He blots every other sight from my eyes; and had I a sceptre he should be master of it.

DAPH. It would be useless, then, to try to tear this love from our breasts. Our hearts are too steadfast in their wishes. Only let us try, if possible, to remain friends; and since we both have formed the same designs for the same youth, let us act with the utmost candour in this matter, and not take a mean advantage of each other. Let us hasten together to Lycarsis, and confide to him our tender feelings for his son.

EROX. I can hardly conceive, so great is my surprise, how such a son could spring from such a father. His shape, his mien, his words, his eyes, all make you believe

that the blood of the gods runs in his veins. But I consent, let us go and find the father. Let us open our hearts to him, and agree that Myrtil shall decide by his own choice afterwards this contest of our desires.

DAPH. Be it so. I perceive Lycarsis with Mopse and Nicandre. They will leave him perhaps. Let us hide ourselves till they do.

SCENE III.—LYCARSIS, MOPSE, NICANDRE.

NIC. (To LYCARSIS). Tell us your news?

LYC. Ah! how you press me! It does not do to tell these things as you imagine.

MOP. What silly ceremonies, and what tomfoolery! Menalcus does not make more to sing.

LYC. Amongst the busy-bodies in political matters, the divulging of news generally causes a great stir. I wish to be considered as rather a man of importance, and enjoy your impatience a little longer.

NIC. Do you wish to tire us both by your delay?

MOP. Do you take pleasure in making yourself a bore?

NIC. Prithee, speak out, and stop these grimaces.

LYC. Ask me both in a decent manner, and tell me what you will give me if I do as you wish.

MOP. Plague take the fool! Let us leave him, Nicandre. He is more anxious to tell than we are to hear. His news weighs him down, he wishes to get rid of it, and we will just vex him by not listening.

LYC. Eh!

NIC. It serves you right for your ado.

LYC. I will tell it you, listen.

MOP. Not at all.

LYC. What! you do not wish to hear me?

NIC. No.

LYC. Very well. I will not say a word, and you shall know nothing.

MOP. All right.

LYC. You shall not know, then, that the King has come to honour Tempe with his presence in the most magnificent style; and that he made his entry into Larissa yesterday afternoon; and that I saw him there comfortably installed with the whole Court; that these woods will be

rejoiced to-day at the sight of him; and that there are a great many rumours abroad in connection with his visit.⁹

NIC. We do not wish to know anything.

LYC. I have seen a hundred things there, delightful to behold. Nothing but great lords, glittering and brilliant from head to foot, as if dressed for a holiday; they astonish one's eyes; and are more dazzling than our meadows at spring-time with all their flowers. As for the prince himself, he is easily known among all the rest; he looks like a grand monarch a mile off.¹⁰ There is a something about him that makes you tell at once that he is a master King. He performs his part with matchless grace; and to say the truth, it suits him admirably. You would hardly believe how every one at court eagerly watches for a glance; there reigns around him a pleasant confusion; and one would think it a swarm of brilliant insects following everywhere a sweet honeycomb. In short, I have seen nothing so lovely under the canopy of Heaven; and our much cherished feast of Pan is a mere piece of trash compared with this spectacle. Since you seem so proud, I keep my news to myself, and shall tell nothing.

MOP. And we do not in the least wish to hear you.

LYC. Go to the right about.

MOP. Go and hang yourself.

SCENE IV.—ÉROXÈNE, DAPHNÉ, LYCARSIS.

LYC. (*Believing himself alone*). That is the way to punish people when they are foolish and impertinent.

DAPH. Heaven always preserve your flock, shepherd!

EROX. May Ceres always keep your barns full of corn.

LYC. And may the great Pan give to each of you a husband, who will love you much and be worthy of you!

DAPH. Ah, Lycarsis! our wishes tend to the same end.

⁹ Molière has also employed in *George Dandin* a talkative servant named Lubin, who tells his secret, after having said that his hearer should know nothing.

¹⁰ This was intended as a compliment to Louis XIV. The original has *Et d'une stade loin il sent son grand monarque*. Of course, Molière did not intend to insinuate anything: yet it is rather funny that he should use the words *il sent*, "he smells," considering the uncleanly personal habits of Louis XIV., and his intense dislike to ablutions, as mentioned by Saint Simon in his *Mémoires*.

EROX. Both our hearts sigh for the same object.

DAPH. And that boy Cupid, the cause of all our languor, has borrowed from you the darts with which he wounds our hearts.

EROX. And we have come here to seek your countenance, and to see which of us two shall have the preference.

LYC. Nymphs. . . .

DAPH. For this alone we sigh.

LYC. I am. . . .

EROX. For this happiness only we wish.

DAPH. We express our thoughts somewhat freely.

LYC. Why so?

EROX. Good breeding seems somewhat outraged.

LYC. Not at all!

DAPH. But when the heart is consumed with a noble flame, one may, without any shame, make a candid avowal of it.

LYC. I. . . .

EROX. We may be allowed this freedom, and the beauty of our hearts' choice warrants it.

LYC. You shock my modesty by flattering me thus.

EROX. No, no; affect no modesty in this case.

DAPH. In short, all our happiness is in your keeping.

EROX. Our only hope depends on you.

DAPH. Shall we find any difficulty in you?

LYC. Ah!

EROX. Tell me, shall our wishes be rejected?

LYC. No. Heaven has given me no cruel heart. I take after my late wife; and I feel, like her, a great sympathy with the desires of others. And I am not the man to show much pride.¹¹

DAPH. Then grant us Myrtil to our ardent love.

EROX. And allow his choice to adjust our quarrel.

LYC. Myrtil?

DAPH. Yes, it is Myrtil whom we desire of you.

EROX. Of whom did you think we were speaking?

¹¹ Auger, one of the commentators of Molière, thinks that the wife of Lycarsis was mentioned here on purpose, because it was probably the intention of Molière afterwards to explain how Myrtil had passed so long for Lycarsis' son.

LYC. I do not know ; but Myrtil is not of an age to take the yoke of matrimony upon himself.

DAPH. His growing merit may strike other eyes ; and we wish to secure so precious a possession, to forestall others, and to brave fortune under the firm ties of a common bond.

EROX. As by his wit and other brilliant qualities, he is out of the common order, and outstrips time ; so shall our affection for him do the same, and regulate all his wishes according to his exceeding merit.

LYC. It is true that for his age he sometimes surprises me ; and that this Athenian, who stayed with me for twenty months, finding him so handsome, took a fancy to fill his mind with his philosophy. He has made him so clever upon certain subjects, that, great as I am, he often puzzles me. But, after all, he is still a child, and his knowledge is mixed with a great deal of innocence.

DAPH. He is not such a child but that I, who see him every day, believe him somewhat love-sick already ; and I have noticed many a thing that shows that he is after young Mélicerte.

EROX. They may be in love with each other, and I can see. . . .

LYC. Nonsense. As for her, I do not say, she is two years older than he, and two years with her sex means a great deal. But as for him, he dreams of nothing but play, I think, and of his little vanities of being dressed like the shepherds of lofty rank.

DAPH. In short, we wish, by the marriage tie to attack his fortune to ours.

EROX. We are both equally eager to assure ourselves before-hand of the mastery of his heart.

LYC. I feel myself more honoured than you would think. I am but a poor herdsman ; and it is certainly too much glory that two nymphs of the highest rank in the land should contend for making my son their husband. Since he pleases you so much, let the matter be arranged in this way. I consent that his choice shall adjust your dispute ; and she, whom his decree shall set aside, may marry me in compensation, if she likes. At all events, it is the same blood, and almost the same thing. But here he is. Allow

me to prepare him a little. He has some sparrow newly caught: and this is nearly all his love and attachment.

SCENE V.—ÉROXÈNE, DAPHNÉ, and LYCARIS (at the further end of the stage), MYRTIL.

MYR. (*Believing himself alone, carrying a sparrow in a cage*). Innocent little bird, that thus, before me, beat your wings so violently against your prison walls, bewail not your loss of freedom. Yours is a glorious fate. I have caught you for Mélicerte. She will kiss you, and take you in her hands, and grant you the favour of nestling in her bosom. Can there be a sweeter and happier lot? Oh, happy little sparrow, where is the King that would not change places with you?

LYC. A word with you, Myrtil. Leave these playthings alone. It is a question of something else than sparrows. These two nymphs, Myrtil, lay claim to you at the same time, and young as you are, desire you for their husband. I am to secure you to them by marriage; and they wish you to choose one of them.

MYR. These nymphs?

LYC. Yes. Of the two you must select one. Look at the happiness in store for you, and bless your good fortune.

MYR. Can this proffered choice be deemed happiness, if my heart does not in the least wish for it?

LYC. At least, acknowledge it; and respond properly, and without confusion, to the honour intended for you.

EROX. Behold, Myrtil, notwithstanding the pride which reigns amongst us, two nymphs who offer themselves to you. The marvellous promise of your worth reverses the order of things in this case.

DAPH. We leave you, Myrtil, as the best judge, in this matter, to consult your own eyes and heart: nor will we influence your choice by a flowery description of our own perfections.

MYR. You intend me an honour the greatness of which dazzles me; but I confess that this honour is too great for me. I must oppose your exceeding goodness; I am of too little worth to deserve such fortune; and however great

its attractions might be, I should be sorry that, for my sake, you should be blamed for having chosen beneath you.

EROX. Comply with our wishes whatever may be said of it, and do not trouble yourself with the care of our glory.

DAPH. No, do not think so humbly of yourself, and leave us to be the judges of your deserts.

MYR. Even the proffered choice opposes itself to your expectations, and alone would prevent my heart from satisfying you. How am I to choose between two great beauties, equal in birth and rare perfections? To reject either would be a terrible crime, and it is much more reasonable to choose neither.

EROX. But in refusing to comply with our desires, instead of one, you offend two, Myrtil.

DAPH. Since we are willing to abide by your decision, you cannot defend yourself with these reasons.

MYR. Well then! if these reasons do not satisfy you, this one will: I love other charms, and I feel full well, that a heart, which a beautiful object engrosses, is indifferent and deaf to all other advantages.

LYC. What now! What means all this? Who could have thought it? And do you know, boy, what love is?

MYR. Without knowing it myself, my heart does.

LYC. But this love displeases me, and is not wanted.

MYR. If it displeases you, you ought not to have given me such a tender and sensitive heart.

LYC. But this heart that I have given you owes me obedience.

MYR. Yes, when it is in its power to obey.

LYC. But it ought not to love without my leave.

MYR. Why did you not hinder it, then, from being charmed?

LYC. Well! I forbid you to let this continue.

MYR. I am afraid your prohibition comes too late.

LYC. What! has not a father superior rights?

MYR. Even the much greater gods cannot control our hearts.

LYC. The gods . . . Peace, little fool. This philosophy makes me . . .

DAPH. Do not be angry, pray.

LYC. No: he shall choose one of you, or I will whip him before your faces. Ha, ha, I will let you know that I am your father.

DAPH. Pray, let us manage matters without anger.

EROX. May we inquire of you, Myrtil, the name of the charming object whose beauty has made you her swain?

MYR. Mélicerte, Madam. She may make others love her.

EROX. Do you compare her attractions to ours, Myrtil?

DAPH. The choice between her and us is unequal enough.

MYR. Nymphs, in Heaven's name, do not say any ill of her. Pray consider that I love her, and do not upset my mind. If, by loving her, I outrage your heavenly charms, she has no part in that crime; all the offence comes from me, if you please. It is true that I know the difference between you and her; but we cannot escape our fate. In short, Nymphs, I feel that Heaven has granted me all imaginable respect for you, but for her all the love of which a heart is capable. I perceive, by the blush that rises in your face, that my words do not please you. My heart fears to hear in your answer what may wound it in its most tender part; and to avoid such a blow, I prefer taking my leave of you, Nymphs.

LYC. Hullo, Myrtil, hullo! Will you come back, you wretch? He is off; but we shall see who is master. Do not concern yourself about all these idle raptures; you shall have him for a husband, I answer with my life for that.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—MÉLICERTE, CORINNE.

MEL. Ah! Corinne, you have heard it from Stella, and she has got the news from Lycarsis?

COR. Yes.

MEL. That Myrtil's charms have touched the hearts of Éroxène and Daphné?

COR. Yes.

MEL. That they are so eager to secure him, that both together have asked for his hand, and that, in their dis-

cussion, they have decided to claim it this very hour? How unwilling you are to speak! and how little my misfortune touches you!

COR. But what would you have me say? This is the truth, and you repeat every word exactly as I told them to you.¹²

MEL. But how does Lycarsis take this matter?

COR. As an honour, I believe, that ought to please him mightily.

MEL. And do not you see, you who know my feelings so well, that, alas! with these words you pierce me to the heart?

COR. How so?

MEL. By showing me thus plainly that implacable fate makes me of so little consequence as compared with them. Is not the thought, that they will be preferred to me, on account of their rank, enough to drive me mad?

COR. But I only answer and say what I think.

MEL. Oh! you kill me with your indifference. But tell me, what feelings did Myrtil show?

COR. I know not.

MEL. That is just what you ought to know, cruel girl!

COR. In truth I do not know what to do. Whatever I do, I am sure to displease you.

MEL. It is because you do not enter into the feelings of a heart too full, alas! of tender passion. Go: Leave me alone in this solitude to pass a few moments of my anxiety.

SCENE II.—MÉLICERTE, *alone*.

Behold, my heart, what it is to love. Too well Bélise warned me of it. That darling mother, before her death, said to me, one day on the banks of the Peneus, "Beware, daughter; Love always comes to young hearts surrounded by sweet guiles. At first it offers nought but what is agreeable; but it drags horrible troubles after it; and if you wish to pass your days in peace, ever defend

¹² This coolness of the confidant, as opposed to the impatience of the loved one, is also found in *The Rogueries of Scapin* (See Vol. III.), when in the first Scene of the first Act, Octave repeats the words which his servant Sylvestre utters.

yourself from its darts, as from an evil." And Oh! my heart, well did I remember those lessons, and when first I beheld Myrtil, when he played with me, and paid me attentions, I always told you to delight less in them. But you believed me not; and your complacency soon changed into too much goodwill. You imagined nought but joy and pleasure from this budding love that flattered your desires. Now you behold the cruel misfortune with which fate threatens you in this ominous day, and the deadly pangs to which it reduces you. Ah my heart! my heart! I warned you. But let us, if we can, conceal our grief. Here comes . . .

SCENE III.—MYRTIL, MÉLICERTE.

MYR. I just now, charming Mélicerte, took a little prisoner, which I have kept for you, and of which I may perhaps become jealous one of these days. It is a young sparrow, which I myself intend to tame with great care, and for your acceptance. The present is not great; but the gods themselves take note of the will only. The intention is everything; and it is never the value of presents that . . . But, Heaven, whence this sadness? What ails you, Mélicerte, and what dark sorrow is reflected in your dear eyes this morning? You do not answer me; and this mournful silence redoubles my anxiety and impatience. Speak, what has annoyed you? What is it?

MEL. It is nothing.

MYR. It is nothing, you say, and yet I see your eyes full of tears. Does this agree, fair charmer? Oh, do not kill me by concealing it, but explain to me what those tears mean.

MEL. It would do me no good to let you know this secret.

MYR. Ought you to have anything that I may not know? Do you not offend this day our loves by wishing to rob me of my share of your troubles? Oh! do not hide it from my affection.

MEL. Well! Myrtil, be it so. I must tell it you, then. I have been informed that, by a choice very glorious for you, Éroxène and Daphné wish you for their husband; and I will confess, Myrtil, that I have the weakness of not

being able to hear this without grief; without accusing fate of her rigorous law, which renders their desires preferable to mine.

MYR. And you can harbour this unjust grief! You can suspect my love of weakness, and you imagine that, bound by such sweet charms, I could ever be another's! that I would accept any other proffered hand! Ah! what have I done, cruel Mélicerte, that you treat my tenderness so harshly, and judge my heart so badly? What! ought you even to doubt it? It makes me very wretched to suffer this suspicion. What is the good of love like mine, alas! when you are so ready to disbelieve it?

MEL. I would fear these rivals less, Myrtil, if things were equal on both sides; and were I of similar rank, I might dare to hope that perhaps love would prefer me. But the inequality of wealth and birth, which makes the difference between them and me . . .

MYR. Ah! their rank will not conquer my heart, and your divine charms stand you instead of all. I love you: that is sufficient; and in you I see rank, wealth, treasures, states, sceptre, crown. Were the greatest monarch's power offered to me, I would not change it for the bliss of possessing you. This is the sincere and unvarnished truth, which to doubt is an insult to me.

MEL. Well! Myrtil, since you wish it, I believe that your vows are not shaken by their rank; and that, notwithstanding their nobility, riches, and beauty, your heart loves me well enough to love me better than them. But you will not follow the voice of love. Your father, Myrtil, will dictate your choice, and I am not dear to him, as I am to you, that he should prefer a simple shepherdess to aught else.

MYR. No, dear Mélicerte, neither father nor gods shall force me to discard your lovely eyes; for ever, queen of my heart, as you are . . .

MEL. Ah, Myrtil, take care what you are doing. Do not indulge my heart with hope, which it would perhaps too willingly receive, and which, vanishing afterwards like a passing flash of lightning, would render my misfortune the more cruel.

MYR. What! Am I to invoke the aid of oaths, when I

promise to love you for ever? How you wrong yourself by such alarms! How little you know the power of your charms! Well! since you wish it, I swear by the gods; and, if that be not enough, I swear by your eyes, that I shall sooner be killed than leave you. Accept here on the spot the pledge which I give you, and suffer my lips to seal the oath with transport on this fair hand.

MEL. Ah! Myrtil, get up for fear you may be seen.

MYR. Is there aught . . . But, oh Heavens, some one comes to disturb my bliss.

SCENE IV.—LYCARSIS, MYRTIL, MÉLICERTE.

LYC. Do not let me disturb you.

MEL. (*Aside*). Cruel fate!

LYC. Not at all bad, this! go on you two. Bless my heart, dear son, how tender you look, and how like a master you set about it already! Has this sage, whom Athens exiled, taught you all these pretty things in his philosophy? And you, my gentle shepherdess, who so sweetly give him your hand to kiss, does honour teach you these tender wiles wherewith you thus debauch young hearts?

MYR. Refrain from these degrading insinuations, and do not pain me with a discourse that insults her.

LYC. I will speak to her, I will. All this billing and cooing . . .

MYR. I will not allow her to be abused. My birth obliges me to have some respect for you; but I shall be able to punish you, upon myself, for this outrage. Yes, I call Heaven to witness, that if, against my wishes, you utter again to her the least harsh word, I shall with this sword give her satisfaction. My pierced heart shall be your punishment, and my spilled blood promptly convince her how highly I disapprove of your anger.

MEL. No, no; do not believe that I purposely inflame him, and that it is my design to seduce his heart. It is by his own free will that he cares to see me, and bears me some goodwill; I do not force him. Not that I wish to refrain from responding to his tender passion by an equally tender one. I love him, I own it, as much as possible; but this attachment has nothing that ought to alarm you. And to disarm all your unjust fears, I promise

you now to avoid his presence, to make room for the choice you have resolved upon, and not to listen to his protestations of love unless you wish it.

SCENE V.—LYCARSIS, MYRTIL.

MYR. Well ! now she is gone, you triumph. She has spoken, and you have obtained all that you desire. But know that you rejoice in vain, and that you will be disappointed in your expectations ; and that do what you will, all your power shall not shake my determination.

LYC. What presumption is this, sirrah ? Is this the way to talk to me ?

MYR. Yes, I am wrong, it is true : and my anger is not seemly. I will change my tone, as becomes me ; and I beseech you father, in the name of the gods, and by all that can be most dear to you, not to use in this conjuncture the supreme power which nature gives you over me. Do not embitter your most precious gifts. I owe my being to you ; but shall I be indebted to you this day if you render life unbearable to me ?¹³ Without Mélicerte, it becomes a torment ; nothing is of value to me without her divine charms. They contain all my happiness and all my desires, and if you take them away, you take life itself.

LYC. (*Aside*). He makes me share his heart-felt grief. Who would have ever thought it of the little rogue ? What passion ! what excitement ! what talk for one of his age ! It quite confuses me, and I feel that I am interested in his love.

MYR. (*Throwing himself at Lycarsis' knees*). Say, will you condemn me to die ? You have but to speak : I am ready to obey.

LYC. (*Aside*). I can hold out no longer : he draws tears from me, and his tender words make me yield.

MYR. If in your heart a spark of friendship inspires you with the slightest pity for my fate, grant Mélicerte to my ardent desire, and you will give me more than life.

LYC. Get up.

¹³ Nearly these very words are used by Marianne, when she endeavours to soften the heart of her father, Orgon, in the third Scene of the fourth Act of *Tartuffe*.

MYR. Will you take pity on my sighs?

LYC. Yes.

MYR. Shall I obtain the object of my desires?

LYC. Yes.

MYR. You will make her uncle give me her hand?

LYC. Yes, get up, I tell you.

MYR. Oh! best of fathers, let me kiss your hands after so much kindness.

LYC. Ah! how weak a father is for his children! Can we refuse aught to their tender words? Do we not feel some sweet emotions within us, when we reflect that they are part of ourselves?

MYR. But will you keep your given promise? Tell me that you will not change your mind.

LYC. No.

MYR. If any one should make you change your feelings, have I your leave to disobey you? Say!

LYC. Yes. Ah, Nature! Nature! I will go and see Mopse, and acquaint him with the love his niece and you have for each others.

MYR. How much I owe to your exceeding kindness. (*Alone*). What happy news to tell Mélicerte! I would not accept a crown in exchange for the pleasure of telling her this marvellous success that will please her so much.

SCENE VI.—ACANTHE, TYRÉNE, MYRTIL.

ACAN. Ah, Myrtil, the charms which you have received from Heaven are the cause of tears in us; their dawning beauty, so fatal to our desires, robs us of the hearts of those we love.

TYR. May we inquire, Myrtil, which of these two fair ones you will choose, of which there is so much talk? and upon which of us two the blow is to fall that shatters all our expectant affections?

ACAN. Do not let two lovers pine any longer. Tell us what fate your heart prepares for us.

TYR. It is better, when one fears such terrible misfortune, to be killed outright by one blow, than to linger so long.

MYR. Let your love resume its calm career, noble shepherds; the lovely Mélicerte has captivated my heart. My

lot is sweet enough with her not to wish to encroach upon you, and if your passions have only mine to fear, neither of you will have any cause to complain.

ACAN. Can it be, Myrtil, that two sad lovers . . .

TYR. Can it be true that Heaven, giving way to our tortures . . .

MYR. Yes, content with my fetters as with a victory, I have declined this choice so full of glory. I have also changed my father's wishes, and made him consent to my happiness.

ACAN. (*To Tyrène*). Ah! what a charming miraculous adventure is this, and what a great obstacle it removes to our pursuits!

TYR. It may restore these nymphs to our love, and be the means of making us both happy.

SCENE VII.—NICANDRE, MYRTIL, ACANTHE, TYRÈNE.

NIC. Do you know where Mélicerte may be found?

MYR. What do you mean?

NIC. She is being looked for everywhere.

MYR. And why?

NIC. We shall soon lose this beauty. It is for her that the King has come hither; it is said that he will marry her to some great lord.

MYR. Oh, Heaven! explain these words, I pray.

NIC. They are important and mysterious events. Yes, the King has come to seek Mélicerte in these spots, and they say that formerly her mother Bélise, of whom all Tempe believed Mopse to be the brother . . . But I have undertaken to look for her everywhere. You shall know all about it by-and bye.

MYR. Oh, great gods, what a calamity! He! Nicandre, Nicandre!

ACAN. Let us follow him that we may know all.¹⁴

¹⁴ La Grange and Vinot, the editors of the first collected edition of Molière's works (1682), and who published for the first time *Mélicerte*, state "this comedy has not been finished; only these two acts were done when the King asked for it. His Majesty having been satisfied with it, for the feast where it was represented, M. de Molière has not finished it."

PASTORALE COMIQUE.

A COMIC PASTORAL.

INTRODUCED BY MOLIERE IN

THE BALLET OF THE MUSES.

(*THE ORIGINAL IN VERSE.*)

JANUARY 5TH, 1667.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

THE *Pastorale Comique* was probably represented before the Court on the 5th January, 1667; it formed part of the *Ballet of the Muses*, and most likely replaced the unfinished *Mélicerte* when the ballet was again given in the beginning of that month. We cannot now discover what plan Molière has followed, or what he intended with the *Pastorale Comique*: he himself suppressed or destroyed the manuscript, and we have only now the couplets that were sung, and which are preserved in the ballet-book and in the musical partition. They show, according to some commentators, a violent desire, in Molière, to deaden his feelings. I confess that I can see in them only the ordinary words of an operatic libretto. We know that our author played the part of Lycas, after he had just been ill; it is possible that his hollow and lean features may intentionally have rendered more ridiculous his love declarations.

I have not thought it necessary to give the names of the dancers, singers, musicians, or gipsies, which are stated in the official programme of the feasts. We have followed in the headings the collected edition of Molière's works, 1734.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

IN THE PASTORAL.

LYCAS, *a rich shepherd in love with Iris.*¹

PHILÈNE, *a rich shepherd in love with Iris.*

CORYDON, *a young shepherd, friend of Lycas, in
love with Iris.*

A HERDSMAN, *friend of Philène.*

A SHEPHERD.

IRIS, *a young shepherdess.*

IN THE BALLET.

DANCING MAGICIANS

SINGING MAGICIANS.

DANCING DEMONS.

PEASANTS.

A SINGING AND DANCING GIPSY.

DANCING GIPSIES.

Scene.—THESSALY, IN A SMALL VILLAGE IN THE
VALLEY OF TEMPE.

¹ Moliere played this part himself.

A COMIC PASTORAL.

(PASTORALE COMIQUE).

SCENE I.—LYCAS, CORYDON.

SCENE II.—LYCAS, DANCING AND SINGING MUSICIANS,
DEMONS.

First Entry of the Ballet.

Two Musicians begin dancing a kind of enchantment to beautify Lycas. They strike the ground with their wands, whereupon six Demons spring from it, who join them. Three more Musicians appear from underground.

THREE MAGICIANS (*singing*). Goddess of charms, refuse us not the favour which our lips implore of you. We beseech you for it by your ribbons, by your diamond buckles, by your paint and powder, by your patches, your mask, your head-dress, and your gloves.

A MAGICIAN (*by himself*). O you! who can beautify the plainest faces, deign to spread, O Venus! two or three charitable doses of your charms over this freshly clipped snout!

THE THREE MAGICIANS (*singing*). Goddess of charms, refuse us not the favour which our lips implore of you. We beseech you for it by your ribbons, by your diamond

buckles, by your paint and powder, by your patches, your mask, your head-dress, and your gloves.

Second Entry of the Ballet.

The six dancing Demons dress Lycas up in a ridiculous and strange fashion.

THE THREE MAGICIANS (*singing*). Ah! how lovely the youngster is now! Ah! how lovely! how lovely! How many fair ones he will kill. The most cruel maids will jump out of their skin when they approach him. Ah! how lovely the youngster is now. Ah! how lovely, how lovely! Ho, ho, ho, ho, ho, ho!

Third Entry of the Ballet.

The Magicians and the Demons continue their dancing, whilst the three singing Magicians continue to make fun of Lycas.

THREE MAGICIANS (*singing*). How fair is he! how pretty and polished! How fair is he! how fair is he! Are there any eyes that can withstand him? He is more lovely than the late Narcissus, who was a consummate beau. How fair is he! how pretty and polished! How fair is he! Hi, hi, hi, hi, hi, hi!

(*The three singing Magicians disappear in the ground, and the dancing Magicians exeunt at the sides.*)

SCENE III.—LYCAS, PHILÈNE.

PHIL. (*without perceiving Lycas, sings*). Browse, my pretty lambs, the sprouting grass. These meadows and these brooks have something to charm you. But if you wish to live content forever, dear little innocents, beware of love.

LYC. (*without perceiving Philène, and wishing to compose some verses for his mistress, pronounces the name of Iris loud enough for Philène to hear it*).

PHIL. Is it you whom I hear, audacious wretch? Is it you who dare pronounce the name of her who holds me 'neath her sway.

LYC. Yes, it is I; yes, it is I.

PHIL. How dare you in any way profane that lovely name?

LYC. Eh, why not? why not?

PHIL. Iris charms my soul; and whosoever shall dare to indulge in the slightest spark of love for her will repent of it.

LYC. I do not care for that, I do not care for that.

PHIL. I will strangle and eat you, if ever you name my fair. Whatever I say I do—I will strangle and eat you. It is enough that I have sworn it. Even if the gods take your part, I will strangle and eat you, if ever you name my fair.

LYC. Nonsense, nonsense.

SCENE IV.—IRIS, LYCAS.

SCENE V.—LYCAS, A COWHERD.

A Cowherd brings Lycas a challenge from Philène,
his rival.

SCENE VI.—LYCAS, CORYDON.

SCENE VII.—PHILÈNE, LYCAS.

PHIL. (*sings*). Stay wretch! turn round; and let us see which of us two shall gain the day.

(*Lycas hesitates to fight.*)

Enough of chatter; come, you must die.

SCENE VIII.—PHILÈNE, LYCAS, EIGHT PEASANTS.

The peasants rush in to separate Philène and Lycas.

Fourth Entry of the Ballet.

The peasants begin to quarrel among themselves, while they are trying to separate the two shepherds, and dance while fighting.

SCENE IX.—CORYDON, LYCAS, PHILÈNE, PEASANTS.

Corydon, by speaking to them, finds means to appease the dispute of the peasants.

Fifth Entry of the Ballet.

The reconciled peasants dance together.

SCENE X.—CORYDON, LYCAS, PHILÈNE.

SCENE XI.—IRIS, CORYDON.

SCENE XII.—PHILÈNE, LYCAS, IRIS, CORYDON.

Lycas and Philène, the two lovers of the shepherdess, press her to decide which of them she prefers.

PHIL. (*to Iris*). Do not expect me to boast about the choice regarding which you hesitate; you can see I love you; that tells you enough.

The shepherdess decides in favour of Corydon.

SCENE XIII.—PHILÈNE, LYCAS.

PHIL. Alas! can any one feel a more poignant grief? A menial shepherd is to us preferred, oh Heavens!

LYC. (*sings*). Oh fates!

PHIL. What harshness!

LYC. What a blow!

PHIL. So many tears,

LYC. And so much perseverance,

PHIL. Such languor,

LYC. So much suffering,

PHIL. Such protestations,

LYC. And such cares,

PHIL. Such ardour,

LYC. So much love,

PHIL. Are treated with so much disdain this day! Ah! cruel one!

LYC. Hard-hearted fair!

PHIL. And tigress too!

LYC. Merciless maid!

PHIL. Inhuman one!

LYC. You stubborn girl!

PHIL. Ungrateful one!

LYC. Pitiless one!

PHIL. You wish to kill us then? it is well; we shall content you.

LYC. We shall obey you.

PHIL. (*drawing his javelin*). Lycas, let us die.

LYC. (*drawing his javelin*). Philène, let us die.

PHIL. Let us end our sufferings with this steel.

LYC. Pierce !

PHIL. Be firm !

LYC. Take courage !

PHIL. Come, you first.

LYC. No, I will be last.

PHIL. Since the same misfortune this day brings us together, let us depart together.

SCENE XIV.—A SHEPHERD, LYCAS, PHILÈNE.

THE SHEPHERD (*sings*). What folly to quit life for a fair one who rejects us ! We might wish to quit this life for a lovely object's sake, whose heart favours us, but to die for the fair one who rejects us, is folly !

SCENE XV.—A GIPSY, DANCING GIPSIES.

THE GIPSY. Relieve the torment of a poor heart. Of a poor heart relieve the suffering. In vain I depict my ardent flame ; I see you laugh at my repining : Ah ! cruel one, I die through so much harshness. Relieve the martyrdom of a poor heart ; of a poor heart relieve the suffering.

Sixth Entry of the Ballet.

Twelve gipsies, of whom four play the guitar, four the castagnettes, four the *gnacares*,² dance with the gipsy to the measure of her song.

THE GIPSY. Believe me, let us hasten, my Sylvia, and profit well by the precious time ; let us here satisfy our desires. The passions of our age invite us ; you and I could not do better.

Winter has covered our fields with ice, Spring comes to take her place again, and to our pastures gives their charms. But when, alas ! old age has chilled us ; our happy days return no more.

Let us seek all day naught but what pleases us ; let us

² The *gnacares* were cymbals of small size, and of unequal diameter. The Saracens used them on horseback to regulate the march of their squadrons.

both be earnest about it ; let pleasures be our business ; let us get rid of all our troubles ; a time will come when we shall have enough of them.

Winter has covered our fields with ice, Spring comes to take her place again, and to our pastures gives their charms. But when, alas ! old age has chilled our feelings, our happy days return no more.

LE SICILIEN; OU, L'AMOUR PEINTRE.
COMÉDIE.

THE SICILIAN; OR, LOVE MAKES THE PAINTER.
COMEDY-BALLET IN ONE ACT.

(THE ORIGINAL PARTLY IN PROSE AND PARTLY IN VERSE.)

FEBRUARY 14TH (?) 1667.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

The Sicilian ; or, Love makes the Painter, was represented, probably on the 14th, or the 16th of February 1667, at the palace of Versailles, before Louis XIV. and the whole court. It was not placed, like *Mélicerte* and the *Pastorale Comique*, in the third entry of the *Ballet des Muses*, but formed a fourteenth entry, with the following official heading :—" Fourteenth entry. After so many different nations which the Muses made to appear in the divers assemblies which formed the entertainment which they gave to the King, there was nothing wanting but to bring upon the stage Turks and Moors; and that is what they have thought of doing in this last entry, with which they have connected a little comedy to give scope to the charms of music and dancing, by which they wish to end."

We give the official libretto of the analysis of *The Sicilian*, omitting only the names of the dancers and singers. The senator of the comedy is here called "a Sicilian magistrate."

Scene 1st. Hali, by his master's orders, brings upon the stage three Turkish musicians to give a serenade.

Scene 2d. Adraste asks for the three musicians, and, to oblige Isidore to come to the window, lets them sing a scene from a comedy.

Scene 3d. Don Pedro, in the dark, comes out of the house in a dressing-gown, to try to discover who gives the serenade.

Scene 4th. Hali promises his master to invent some trick in order to let Isidore know the love which he has for her.

Scene 5th. Isidore complains to Don Pedro of the precaution he takes to bring her everywhere with him.

Scene 6th. Hali, endeavouring to let Isidore know his master's love, cleverly makes use of five Turkish slaves, of whom one sings and the four others dance, proposing them to Don Pedro as slaves agreeable and capable of amusing him. A Turkish slave sings at first, "An impassioned heart follows his beloved object everywhere, &c.," by which he pretends to express the passion of Adraste, and to make it known to Isidore in the presence of Don Pedro. The Turkish slave, after having sung, fearing that Don Pedro might understand the meaning of what he had just said, and perceive the trick, turns wholly towards Don Pedro, and to amuse him, sings in the *lingua franca* these words, "Chiribirida houcha

la, &c.," whereupon the four other Turkish slaves dance. The slave, who is a musician, begins again "Chiribirida houcha la, &c.," then, convinced that Don Pedro suspects nothing, he addresses himself to Isidore and sings, "It is a complete martyrdom, &c." As soon as he has finished, always afraid that Don Pedro may perceive something, he begins again, "Chiribirida houcha la, &c.," then the four slaves dance again. At last Don Pedro, perceiving the trick, sings in his turn the words, "Do you know, you scamp, &c."¹

Scene 7th. Hali informs his master of what he has done, and his master communicates to him the stratagem he has planned.

Scene 8th.Adraste goes to Don Pedro's house to paint the portrait of Isidore.

Scene 9th. Hali, disguised as a Sicilian gentleman, comes to ask Don Pedro's advice about an affair of honour.

Scene 10th. Isidore commends the politeness ofAdraste to Don Pedro.

Scene 11th. Zaide comes to throw herself into the arms of Don Pedro, so that he might protect her against the pretended anger ofAdraste.

Scene 12th.Adraste pretends that he wishes to kill Zaide; but at Don Pedro's intercession, he moderates his wrath,

Scene 13th. Don Pedro places Isidore, under the veil of Zaide, in the hands ofAdraste.

Scene 14th. Zaide reproaches Don Pedro with his jealousy, and tells him that Isidore is no longer in his power.

Scene 15th. Don Pedro goes to complain before a Sicilian magistrate, who only speaks to him about a masquerade of Moors, which ends the Comedy and the Ballet.

The dancing Moors were of three kinds—Moors and Moorish girls of quality, who were the King, M. le Grand, the Marquesses de Villeroi and de Rassan, Madame, Mademoiselle de la Vallière, Madame de Rochefort, and Mademoiselle de Brancas; naked Moors and *Maures à capots*, or Moors with light dresses to imitate skin, who were professional dancers.

This comedy was not given to the public before the 10th of June 1667, when it was acted for the first time, with the eighteenth representation of *Attila*, a tragedy by P. Corneille. This delay had been caused by an attack of illness of Molière.

In this little comedy, the author has often employed blank verse; and that he has done so purposely has clearly been proved.

John Crowne, in *The Country Wit*, acted at the Duke's Theatre in 1675, has imitated a large portion of the plot, as well as of the language of *The Sicilian*. Crowne's play is said to have been a great favourite with Charles II. and also with the public, although the author, in the dedication to the Right Honourable Charles, Earl of Middlesex, better known as the Earl of Dorset, states that it "stood firmer than I expected, and withstood the battery of a whole party who did me the honour to profess themselves my enemies, and made me appear more considerable than ever I thought myself, by shewing that no less than a confederacy was necessary to ruin my reputation." Both in the prologue and in the dedication, the author

¹ This is the ninth scene of the Comedy.

sarcastically states that every man thinks himself a wit, and that "city and country is with wit o'erflown." *Country Wit* is rather a good, though a very coarse, play. Don Pedro is called Lord Drybone; Isidore, Betty Frisque; Hali, Merry; and Adraste, Ramble; but there is also another plot in this comedy, in which Sir Thomas Rash wishes his daughter Christina to marry Sir Mannerly Shallow, a foolish country knight. Instead of Hali and Pedro quarrelling, as in *The Sicilian*, Sir Thomas and Lord Drybone fight and are seized by the watch; in the English play, it is also Merry, the servant, who advises his master to go to Betty Frisque's house as a painter, whilst, in the French comedy, Adraste plans it himself. Lady Faddle, Sir Mannerly Shallow, and the porter, Thomas Rash, and his wife are not to be found in *The Sicilian*. The first two characters appear to be a reminiscence of Molière's *Countess of Escarbagnas* and *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*, whilst some of the scenes between Rambler and his man seem to be freely followed from some in the French author's *Amphitryon*. Crowne's play gives a very peculiar idea of the manners and customs of the times in which he wrote. The licentiousness of his personages is only equalled by the excessive freedom of language which they use; a language which must have startled some of the audience, even in Charles II.'s reign.

Sir Richard Steele, in *The Tender Husband*, acted for the first time at the Theatre, Drury Lane, 1703, has also imitated the twelfth scene of Molière's play; but Adraste is there called Captain Clerimont, and Isidore, simply Niece. I imagine that Sir Richard also took the liberty of borrowing from Crowne's Sir Mannerly Shallow and transforming him into Humphrey Gubbin. Addison wrote the prologue, and is said to have given some assistance in the composition of this play.

Charles Dibdin also wrote an opera called *The Metamorphoses*, acted at the Haymarket, probably at the end of 1776, but not with much success, and which is borrowed chiefly from Molière's *Sicilian*, with one character from *George Dandin*. Don Pedro wishes to marry his ward Marcella. Fabio, the servant, assumes, like Hali, various disguises. The catastrophe in which Juletta enters, veiled, Don Pedro's house, and asks the latter to protect her against Lysander, her husband's wrath, and in which Marcella leaves her home muffled in the veil of Juletta, is borrowed from *The Sicilian*; the booby servant Perer is imitated from *George Dandin*.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DON PEDRO, *a Sicilian gentleman.*²

ADRASTE, *a French gentleman, in love with Isidore.*

ISIDORE, *a Greek girl, Don Pedro's slave.*

A SENATOR.

HALI, *a Turk, Adraste's slave.*

ZAIDE, *a young slave girl.*

TWO SERVANTS.

MUSICIANS.

A SLAVE, *singing.*

SLAVES, *dancing.*

MOORS OF BOTH SEXES, *dancing.*

² This part was played by Molière himself. In the inventory taken after Molière's death, and given by M. E. Soulié in the *Recherches sur Molière*, we find: "A dress for *The Sicilian*, the breeches and cloak of violet satin, embroidered with gold and silver, lined with green tabby, the skirt of gold-colour watered silk, with sleeves of silver cloth, adorned with silver embroideries; also a night-cap, a wig, and a sword."

THE SICILIAN; OR, LOVE MAKES THE PAINTER

LE SICILIEN; OU, L'AMOUR PEINTRE.

SCENE I.—HALI, MUSICIANS.

HALI. (*To the musicians*). Hush. Do not come any farther, and stay where you are until I call you.

SCENE II.—HALI, *alone*.

It is as dark as pitch. The sky is dressed like a *Scaramouche*³ this evening, and I do not see a star that shows the tip of its nose. What a droll condition is that of a slave, never to live for one's self, and always to be entirely engrossed by the passions of one's master, to be controlled by nothing but his whims, and to see one's self reduced to make all his cares one's own concern! Mine makes me here share his anxieties; and because he is in love, I

³ See Vol. II., page 145, note 4. Let me state, at the same time, that Scaramouche was very much liked by Louis XIV., and, when first presented, sang a trio with a trained dog and a parrot. In the latter part of his life, Scaramouche had the misfortune to marry a coquette; but the King took an interest in the actor's marital misfortunes, and even got his minister to write to the Lieutenant-General of Police about her conduct. The magistrate threatened her with imprisonment, if she did not lead a more moral, sober, and righteous life.

am forced to lose my rest both day and night. But here come some torch-bearers. It is he, no doubt.⁴

SCENE III.—ADRASTE, TWO SERVANTS, *each carrying a torch*, HALI.

ADR. Is it you, Hali?

HALI. And who should it be but me? At this hour of the night, except you and me, sir, I do not think that anyone takes it into his head to roam the streets now.

ADR. Nor do I think that anyone can be met who feels in his heart the grief that I do. For, after all, it is nothing to have to overcome the indifference or the harsh treatment of the fair one, whom one loves; one has always, at least, the pleasure of complaining, and the liberty of sighing for her. But not to be able to find any opportunity of speaking to her whom one adores, not to be able to learn from the fair one whether the passion which her eyes have kindled pleases or displeases her; that is, in my opinion, the most annoying of all anxieties; and that is to what I am reduced by that tiresome, jealous fellow, who watches with such care over my charming Greek, and who does not stir a step, without dragging her at his side.

HALI. But in love there are various ways of speaking to each other; and it seems to me that your eyes and hers have told many things during nearly two months.

ADR. It is true that she and I have frequently spoken to each other through our eyes; but how to find out if we

⁴ We have said in the *Introductory Notice*, that Molière has employed blank verse in this play. We give below Hali's soliloquy in French, not as it is printed in the original, but scanned:

"Il fait noir comme dans un four,
Le ciel s'est habillé ce soir en Scaramouche,
Et je ne vois pas une étoile
Qui montre le bout de son nez.
Sotte condition que celle d'un esclave,
De ne vivre jamais pour soi,
Et d'être toujours tout entier
Aux passions d'un maître . . .
Le mien me fait ici
Epouser ses inquiétudes;
Et, parce qu'il est amoureux
Il faut que nuit et jour je n'aie aucun repos.
Mais voici des flambeaux, et, sans doute, c'est lui."

have correctly interpreted this language, on either side ? And how do I know, after all, whether she quite understands everything that my glances tell her, and whether hers tell me that which I sometimes fancy they do ?

HALI. We must find some other mode of speaking with her.

ADR. Have you your musicians here ?

HALI. Yes.

ADR. Tell them to come near. (*Alone*). I will make them sing here until daybreak, and see whether their music will not oblige the fair one to come to one of the windows.

SCENE IV.—ADRASTE, HALI, MUSICIANS.

HALI. Here they are. What shall they sing ?

ADR. What they think best

HALI. They must sing the trio that they sung to me the other day.

ADR. No. That is not what I want.

HALI. Ah ! sir, it is in that beautiful natural.

ADR. What the deuce do you mean by that beautiful natural ?

HALI. Sir, I am fond of the natural. You know that I am a judge. I love the natural ; without the natural, there is no salvation in harmony. Just listen for a little to this trio.

ADR. No, I wish something tender and impassioned ; something that will lull me as in a sweet dream.

HALI. I see that you prefer the flat ;⁵ but there is a way of satisfying us both. They shall sing a certain scene of a little comedy that I have heard them attempt. Two shepherds, in love, quite full of languor, separately come into a grove to make their complaints in a flat ; they confide to each other the cruelty of their mistresses ; then comes a jovial shepherd with an admirable natural, who laughs at their weakness.

ADR. Very well. Let us hear what it is.

HALI. Here is just the very spot to serve as a stage ; and here are two torches to throw a light upon the play.

⁵ The French for a natural is *bécarre*, and for a flat *démol*.

ADR. Place yourself against this house, so that at the slightest noise inside, we may extinguish the lights.

FRAGMENT OF A COMEDY, SUNG AND ACCOMPANIED BY
THE MUSICIANS WHOM HALI HAS BROUGHT.

SCENE I.—PHILÈNE, TIRCIS.

FIRST MUSICIAN (*who represents Philène*). If with the sorrowful tale of my grief I disturb the quiet of your solitude, do not be angry, O rocks. Rocks, though you are, you will be touched, when you know the excess of my hidden anguish.

SECOND MUSICIAN (*who represents Tircis*). The glad-some birds, when day begins to break, renew their song in these vast forests ; and I renew my languishing sighs, and my sad regrets. Ah ! dear Philène.

PHIL. Ah ! dear Tircis !

TIR. What grief I feel !

PHIL. What cares I have !

TIR. Ever deaf to my sighs is the ungrateful Climène.

PHIL. Chloris has no sweet looks for me.

BOTH TOGETHER. O too inhuman law ! If you cannot compel them to love, O Cupid ! why do you leave them the power of charming ?

SCENE II.—PHILÈNE, TIRCIS, A SHEPHERD.

THIRD MUSICIAN (*who represents a shepherd*). Poor lovers, what a mistake to adore merciless creatures ! Sensible minds ought never to bear with harsh treatment ; and favors are the chains which ought to bind our hearts. Here are a hundred fair ones to whom I hasten to offer my tender cares ; it is my greatest delight. But when they act like tigresses, upon my word I become a tiger too.

PHIL. AND TIR. (*Together*). Happy, alas ! are they who can love thus.

HALI. Sir, I just heard some noise inside.

ADR. Be off quickly, and extinguish the torches.

SEENE V.—DON PEDRO, ADRASTE, HALI.

DON P. (*In a night-cap and a dressing-gown, with a sword under his arm, coming out of his house*). I have noticed this singing going on for some time at my door; and no doubt this is not done for nothing. I must try to discover in the dark who these people can be.

ADR. Hali.

HALI. What is it?

ADR. Do you no longer hear anything?

HALI. No. (*Don Pedro is behind them, listening*).

ADR. What! are all our efforts to speak for one moment with this pretty Greek in vain; and shall this cursed jealous fellow, this wretched Sicilian, for ever bar all access to her?

HALI. I wish with all my heart that the devil had taken him for the trouble he gives us, the tiresome fellow, the hangdog that he is. Ah! if we only had him here, how delighted should I be to avenge upon his back all the fruitless steps which his jealousy causes us.

ADR. We must, for all that, find some means, some trick, some stratagem, to catch our brute. I am too far advanced to be baffled now; and although I should have to use . . .

HALI. I do not know what this means, but the door is open, Sir; and, if you like, I will go in softly and find out what is the cause of this.

(*Don Pedro goes back to his door.*)

ADR. Yes, do so; but do not make a noise. I shall not be far away. Would to Heaven it were the charming Isidore!

DON P. (*Giving Hali a slap in the face*). Who goes there?

HALI. (*Doing the same to Don Pedro*). A friend.

DON P. Hullo! Francisque, Dominique, Simon, Martin Pierre, Thomas, Georges, Charles, Barthélemy. Come, look sharp, my sword, my buckler, my halberd, my pistols, my blunderbusses, my guns. Quick, make haste. Here, kill and slay, give no quarter.

SCENE VI.—ADRASTE, HALI.

ADR. I hear not a soul stir. Hali, Hali!

HALL. (*Hid in a corner*). Sir?

ADR. Where are you hiding yourself?

HALL. Have these people come out?

ADR. No. No one is stirring.

HALL. (*Coming out of his corner*). If they do come, they shall have a drubbing.

ADR. What! Shall all our trouble be for nothing? Shall this tiresome, jealous fellow always laugh at our attempts?

HALL. No. I get angry, and my honour is at stake; it shall not be said that anyone has outwitted me. My reputation as a rogue disdains all these obstacles; and I am determined to show the talents that Heaven has given me.

ADR. I only wish her, by some means, by some note, by some voice, to be informed of my feelings towards her, and in return, to know hers upon the subject. After that, we can easily find some means . . .

HALL. Only let me manage it. I shall try so many sorts of things, that, something or other, in short, may succeed. Come, day breaks; I shall go and fetch my men, and wait here, until our jealous fellow goes out.

SCENE VII.—DON PEDRO, ISIDORE.

ISID. I do not know what pleasure you can have in waking me so early. It agrees badly, I think, with your intention of having my portrait painted to-day. You can hardly expect me to have a fresh complexion and sparkling eyes by making me get up at break of day.

DON P. Some business compels me to go out at this hour.

ISID. But this business can be very well transacted, I believe, without my presence; and you might, without incommoding yourself, have allowed me to taste the sweets of the morning's slumber.

DON P. Yes. But I am very glad of having you always with me. It is as well to be on one's guard a little against those vigilant swains; and not later than last night, people came and sang under our windows.

ISID. That is true. The music was charming.

DON P. It was intended for you?

ISID. I must believe so, since you say so.

DON P. Do you know who gave this serenade?

ISID. I do not; but, whoever he was, I am obliged to him.

DON P. Obligated?

ISID. Undoubtedly, since he seeks to amuse me.

DON P. You think it right, then, that people love you?

ISID. Decidedly. There is never anything offensive in that?

DON P. And you wish well to all who take that trouble?

ISID. Certainly.

DON P. You say pretty plainly what you think.

ISID. What is the good of dissimulating? Whatever we may pretend, we are always well pleased to be loved. This homage to our charms is never disagreeable to us. Whatever we may say, believe me, the great ambition of women is to inspire love. All the cares they bestow upon themselves are for that only; and the proudest inwardly applauds herself for the conquests which her eyes make.

DON P. But if you take so much pleasure in being beloved, do you know that I, who love you, do not take any in it?

ISID. I do not know why this should be, and if I loved any one, I should have no greater pleasure than seeing her beloved by everyone. Is there anything which marks more plainly the beauty of one's choice? and ought we not to congratulate ourselves in thinking that what we love is found very loveable?

DON P. Each one loves in his own peculiar fashion, and this is not my way. I should be very delighted if people did not think you so beautiful, and you will oblige me by not trying to appear so in other people's eyes.

ISID. What! are you jealous of these things?

DON P. Yes, jealous of these things; but as jealous as a tiger, or, if you like it better, as a devil. My love claims you all for itself. Its delicacy is offended at a smile, at a glance which may be drawn from you; and all the precautions which I take are only to bar every access to those admirers, and to assure myself of the possession of a heart, the slightest part of which I cannot bear to be robbed of.

ISID. In good truth, shall I tell you? you enter upon a wrong path; and a possession of a heart is but badly secured, if it is to be retained by force. As for me, I admit candidly, that were I the admirer of a woman who was in some one's power, I would study everything to make that other person jealous, and to compel him to watch night and day over her whom I should like to win. It is an admirable way to forward our wishes, and people are never very long in profiting by the spite and anger which restraint and servitude awake in the breast of a woman.

DON P. At this rate, if any one made love to you, he would find you disposed to receive his addresses?

ISID. I will say nothing about that. But, in short, women do not like to be restrained; and it is running a great risk to show them your suspicions, and to keep them imprisoned.

DON P. You but little acknowledge what you owe me; and it seems to me that a slave, to whom I have given her freedom, and whom I wish to make my wife. . . .

ISID. Where is the obligation, if you but change one slavery into another more severe still, and if you do not allow me to enjoy the least freedom, and tire me, as you do, with continual watching?

DON P. But all this proceeds but from an excess of love.

ISID. If that is your way of loving, I beseech you to hate me.

DON P. You are in a pettish humour to-day; and I forgive you your words on account of the annoyance which you may feel at having risen so early.

SCENE VIII.—DON PEDRO, ISIDORE, HALI (*dressed as a Turk, bowing repeatedly to Don Pedro*).

DON P. A truce to these ceremonies. What do you want?

HALI. (*Placing himself between Don Pedro and Isidore, At each word which he speaks to Don Pedro he turns to Isidore, and makes signs to her to let her understand the designs of his master*). Signor (with the Signora's leave), I will tell you (with the signora's leave), that I have come

to see you (with the signora's leave), to ask you (with the signora's leave), to have the kindness (with the signora's leave). . . .

DON P. With the signora's leave, come a little on this side. (*Don Pedro places himself between Isidore and Hali*).

HALI. I am a virtuoso,⁶ signor.

DON P. I have nothing to give away.

HALI. I am not asking for anything. But as I meddle a little with music and dancing, I have taught some slaves, who would be glad to find a master who takes a delight in these things; and knowing that you are a gentleman of some importance, I have come to ask you to look at them and to listen to them, to buy them if they please you, or to recommend them to one of your friends, who might be willing to engage them.

ISID. We might see their performance; it will amuse us. Fetch them hither.

HALI. Chala, bala. That is a new song, the latest out. Listen well. Chala, bala.

SCENE IX.—DON PEDRO, ISIDORE, HALI, TURKISH SLAVES.

A SLAVE. (*Singing to Isidore*). A lover with an impassioned heart follows its beloved object everywhere; but the eternal watchfulness of an odious jealousy prevents him speaking to her except by his eyes. Can there be aught more painful to a heart in love?⁷ (*To Don Pedro*). Chiribirida ouch alla, Star bon Turca, Non aver danara. Ti voler comprara? Mi servir à ti, Se pagar per mi; Far bona cucina, Mi levar matina, Far boller caldara; Parlara, parlara, Ti voler comprara?⁸

⁶ Molière was the first to employ the word *virtuose* as a French noun, though Madame de Motteville had already used it in its Italian form.

⁷ The ballet-book, which is given in the Introductory Notice, mentions here some indications of stage play, which are very useful for the better understanding of this scene.

⁸ This couplet is in *lingua franca*, and with the exception of the first line, too free to be translated, is as follows: I am a good Turk, I have no money. Will you buy me? I shall serve you, if you pay for me. I shall do good cooking, I shall rise early, I shall make the pot boil. Speak, speak, will you buy me?

First Entry of the Ballet.

Dance of the Slaves.

A SLAVE. (*Singing to Isidore*). It is a complete torture under which this lover expires; but if the fair one will only look upon his martyrdom with a gentle eye, and consent that he may sigh for her charms in the eyes of the whole world, then he may soon laugh at all the precautions of jealousy. (*To Don Pedro*). Chiribirida ouch alla, Star bon Turca, Non aver danara; Ti voler comprara? Mi servir à ti, Se pagar per mi; Far bona cucina, Me levar matina, Far boller caldara; Parlara, parlara, Ti voler comprara?

Second Entry of the Ballet.

The Slaves recommence dancing.

DON. P. (*Sings*); Do you know, you scamps, that this song smells of stick for your backs? Chiribirida ouch alla, Mi ti non comprara, Ma ti bastonara, Si ti non andara; Andara, andara, O ti bastonara.⁹

Oh! oh! what merry sparks! (*To Isidore*). Come, let us go in again: I have changed my mind; and moreover, the weather looks rather threatening. (*To Hali, who comes back*). Ah! you rogue! let me catch you at it again!

HALI. Well! yes, my master adores her. He has no greater desire than to show her his love; and, if she consents to it, to take her for his wife.

DON P. Yes, yes, I will keep her for him.

HALI. We shall get her in spite of you.

DON P. What do you mean, you scoundrel . . .

HALI. We shall get her, I tell you, in spite of your teeth.

DON P. If I take . . .

HALI. You may watch as much as you like. She shall be ours; I have sworn it.

DON P. Leave me alone, I shall catch you without fatiguing myself.

⁹ The meaning of these words, which are also in *lingua franca*, is: I will not buy you, but I will give you a cudgelling, if you do not go away. Go away, go away, or I will give you a cudgelling.

HALI. It is we who will catch you. She shall be our wife ; our mind is made up. (*Alone*). I must accomplish it, or perish in the attempt.

SCENE X.—ADRASTE, HALI, TWO SERVANTS.

ADR. Well, Hali, are our affairs improving?

HALI. I have already made some little attempt, sir ; but I . . .

ADR. Do not trouble yourself about it ; I have found, by accident, all that I wish ; and I shall enjoy the happiness of seeing this fair one in her own house. I happened to be at Damon's, the artist, who told me that he had to go to-day to paint the portrait of this charming creature ; and as we are intimate friends of long standing, he wishes to serve my flame, and sends me, in his place, with a few words of introduction. You know that I was always fond of painting, and that I sometimes handle the brush myself, much against the French custom, which forbids a nobleman to know how to do anything ;¹⁰ so shall I have the liberty of seeing this fair one at my ease. But I do not doubt that my jealous bore will always be there, and prevent any conversation between us ; and, to tell you the truth, I have, by the aid of a young slave girl, prepared a stratagem to get this fair Greek out of the hands of her tormentor, if I can prevail with her to consent to it.

HALI. Leave it to me ; I will put you in the way to converse with her. (*Whispers to Adraste*). It shall not be said that I count for nothing in this affair. When are you going there?

ADR. This very minute ; I have already prepared everything.

HALI. And I am going, on my part, to prepare myself.

ADR. I will lose no time. Hullo ! I will not delay the pleasure of seeing her.¹¹

¹⁰ Several great writers of the age of Louis XVI. have made fun of this privilege of idleness, which many of the French nobles thought to belong to them.

¹¹ When *The Sicilian* is performed in the present day, the scene changes to the interior of Don Pedro's house.

SCENE XI.—DON PEDRO, ADRASTE, TWO SERVANTS.

DON P. For whom are you looking in this house sir?

ADR. I am looking for Don Pedro.

DON P. He stands before you.

ADR. He will take the trouble to read this letter, if it please him,

DON P. *I send you, instead of myself, for the portrait in question, this French gentleman, who, anxious to oblige, has been good enough to undertake this task at my wish. He is unquestionably, the first man in the world for this sort of work, and I thought that I could do you no more agreeable service than to send him to you, since you intend to have a finished portrait of the person whom you love. But, above all, take care not to speak to him about any remuneration; for he would be offended at it, and does these things only for the sake of fame and reputation.* Sir Frenchman, you intend doing me a great favour, and I am very much obliged to you.

ADR. All my ambition is to oblige people of standing and merit.

DON P. I will call the person in question.

SCENE XII.—ISIDORE, DON PEDRO, ADRASTE, TWO SERVANTS.

DON P. (*To Isidore*). This is a gentleman whom Damon sends us, and who will be kind enough to undertake your portrait. (*To Adraste, who, in saluting Isidore, embraces her*). Hullo! Sir Frenchman, this way of saluting is not the fashion in this country.

ADR. It is the fashion of France.

DON P. The fashion of France may suit your ladies; but for ours, it is somewhat too familiar.

ISID. I accept this honour with much pleasure. The adventure surprises me immensely; and, to tell the truth I did not expect to have such an illustrious painter.

ADR. There is no one, doubtless, who would not think it an honour to engage on such a work. I have no great talent; but, in this case, the subject provides more than enough in itself, and we can do something beautiful with such an original to work from.

ISID. The original is but little to speak of; but the skill of the painter will be able to hide its defects.

ADR. The painter cannot perceive any; and all that he wishes is to be able to represent its charms to the world's eyes in the same perfection as he sees them.

ISID. If your brush flatter as much as your tongue, you will paint a portrait which will not be at all like me.

ADR. Heaven, who made the original, has prevented us from making a portrait of it that could be flattering.

ISID. Whatever you may say, Heaven has not . . .

DON P. Let us finish this, pray. Let us leave compliments, and think about the portrait.

ADR. (*To the servants*). Come, bring my things.

(*They bring the necessary painting implements*).

ISID. (*To Adraste*). Where shall I sit?

ADR. Here. This is the right spot, and catches best the precise light we want.

ISID. (*After sitting down*). Am I right thus?

ADR. Yes. Hold yourself up a little. A little more that way. Your body turned thus. Your head raised a little, to show the beauty of the throat. This a little more open. (*He uncovers her neck a little more*). That is it. There, a little more; just another shade.

DON P. (*To Isidore*). What a fuss to put you right; cannot you sit properly?

ISID. These things are altogether new to me; and it is for this gentleman to place me as he likes.

ADR. (*Seated*). There, it could not be better, and you sit admirably. (*Turning her a little towards him*). Like this if you please. The whole depends upon the attitude which we give to the people we paint.

DON P. Very good.

ADR. A little more this way. Your eyes turned towards me, I pray; your looks fixed on mine.

ISID. I am not like those ladies, who, having their portraits painted, wish them to be unlike themselves, and are not satisfied with the painter unless he makes them more lovely than the day. To content them, one ought to make but one picture for them all; for they all ask for the same thing,—a complexion entirely of lilies and roses, a well shaped nose, a small mouth, and large sparkling

eyes; and, above all, the face no larger than a hand, even if they have one a foot wide. As for me, I ask you for a portrait that is like me, and which shall not compel people to ask whose it is.

ADR. It would be difficult to have it asked of yours; and your features are very unlike those of others. How sweet and charming they are, and how much risk there is in painting them!

DON P. The nose seems to me a little too large.

ADR. I have read, I know not where, that Apelles, of old, painted a mistress of Alexander, so marvellously beautiful, that, while painting, he became so hopelessly enamoured of her, that it nearly cost him his life; had not Alexander, out of generosity, ceded to him the object of his love. (*To Don Pedro.*) I might do the same here as Apelles did of old; but you would not do the same perhaps, as Alexander. (*Don Pedro makes a grimace.*)

ISID. (*To Don Pedro.*) This is like all those of his nationality. These French gentlemen have always such a stock of gallantry that they scatter it everywhere.

ADR. One is seldom mistaken in this sort of thing, and you have too much good sense not to see whence come the words which one says to you. Yes, were Alexander present, and your lover, I could not help telling you that I have never beheld aught so beautiful as what I see now, and that . . .

DON P. Sir Frenchman, I think you ought not to talk so much; it takes your attention from your work.

ADR. Ah! Not at all. I am in the habit of talking when I paint, and a little conversation is necessary in these cases to wake up the mind, and to keep the faces of those we paint in the requisite gay mood.

SCENE XIII.—HALI *disguised as a Spanish gentleman*.¹²

DON PEDRO, ADRASTE, ISIDORE.

DON P. What does this man want? And who lets people walk up without announcing them?

HALI. (*To Don Pedro.*) I have entered boldly; but

¹² In the ballet, Hali is dressed as a Sicilian gentleman; but here, as a Spanish one. Hence his Castilian name, Don Gilles d'Avalos.

between gentlemen, such freedom is allowed. Sir, am I known to you?

DON P. No, Sir.

HALI. I am Don Gilles d'Avalos; and the history of Spain must have made you acquainted with my merit.

DON P. Do you wish anything from me?

HALI. Yes, advice upon an affair of honour. I know that it would be difficult to find a gentleman more perfect in these matters than you; but I must beg of you as a favour to draw a little aside.

DON P. This will be fair enough.

ADR. *To Don Pedro, who catches him whispering to Isidore*). She has blue eyes.

HALI. (*Drawing Don Pedro away from Adraste and Isidore*). Sir, I have received a slap in the face. You know what a slap is,¹³ when it is given with an open hand, in the very middle of the cheek. I take this slap much to heart; and I am uncertain whether to avenge the insult, I ought to fight my man, or rather to have him assassinated.

DON P. Assassinated; that is the surest and quickest way. Who is your enemy?

HALI. Let us speak low, if you please.

(*Hali holds Don Pedro, while speaking to him in such a manner that he cannot see Adraste*).

ADR. (*At Isidore's knees, while Hali and Don Pedro whisper together*). Yes, charming Isidore, my looks have told you as much for the last two months, and you have understood them. I love you more than aught else, and I have no other thought, no other aim, no other passion, than to be yours all my life.

ISID. I do not know whether you speak the truth; but you make me believe you.

ADR. But do I make you believe me sufficiently to inspire you with ever so little kindness towards myself?

ISID. I only fear I have too much.

ADR. Have you enough, fair Isidore, to consent to the plan of which I have told you?

ISID. I cannot tell you yet.

¹³ Hali has given a slap in the face to Don Pedro in the fifth scene.

ADR. What are you waiting for?

ISID. To make up my mind.

ADR. Ah! when people love with all their hearts, they make up their minds quickly.

ISID. Very well then! yes, I consent to it.

ADR. But do you consent, tell me, that it be this very moment?

ISID. Very well then; yes, I consent to it.

ADR. But do you consent, tell me, that it be this very moment?

ISID. When once our mind is made up about a thing, do we consider the time?

DON PED. (*To Hal*). This is my opinion, and I kiss your hands.

HAL. Sir if you ever receive a slap in the face, I am also a man of counsel; and I may be able to return the service.

DON P. You will pardon me for not seeing you to the door; but, between gentlemen, such freedom is allowed.

ADR. (*To Isidore*). No, there is nothing that could efface from my heart the tender proofs . . . (*To Don Pedro, who perceives him speaking very closely to Isidore*). I was looking at this little dimple which she has got at the side of her chin, and I thought at first that it was a mole. But we have done enough for to-day; we will finish at another time. (*To Don Pedro, who wishes to see the portrait*). No, do not look at anything yet. Have it carefully put aside, I pray; (*To Isidore*), and you, I beseech you, not to give way, and to keep your spirits up, in order that I may finish my work.

ISID. I shall reserve all the gaiety I can for this.¹⁴

SCENE XIV.—DON PEDRO, ISIDORE.

ISID. What say you? This gentleman seems to me the most polite in the world; and one must admit that the French

¹⁴ One of the most usual contrivances on the stage to see a lover disguising himself in order to get an opportunity of speaking with the object of his love. Molière has employed it four times. In this play Adraste is a painter; in *Love is the best Doctor*, Clitandre is a physician; in *The Physician in spite of himself*, Leander is an apothecary; and in *Le Malade Imaginaire* (see Vol. III.), Cléante is a music master.

have in them something so polished, so gallant, which other nations have not.

DON P. Yes ; but they have that against them that they are somewhat too free, and that, madcap-like, they are too fond of whispering sweet nothings to every woman whom they meet.

ISID. It is because they know that those things please the ladies.

DON P. True ; but if they please the ladies, they very much displease the gentlemen ; and one is not very glad to see one's wife or mistress openly courted to one's very face.

ISID. They do so only in sport.

SCENE XV.—ZAIDE, DON PEDRO, ISIDORE.

ZAI. Ah, Sir, save me, I beseech you, from the hands of an enraged husband who is close upon my heels. His jealousy is incredible, and surpasses in its violence everything imaginable. He carries it so far as to wish me to be always veiled ; and for having found me with my face a little uncovered he has drawn his sword, and he has compelled me to throw myself upon you, and to ask for your protection against his injustice. But I see him coming ; for heaven's sake, honoured Sir, save me from his fury.

DON P. (*To Zaide, pointing to Isidore*). Go in there with her, and fear nothing.

SCENE XVI.—ADRASTE, DON PEDRO.

DON P. What, sir, is it you ? So much jealousy in a Frenchman. I fancied that only we were capable of such a thing.

ADR. The French always excel in everything they do ; and, when we take it into our heads to be jealous, we are twenty times more so than a Sicilian. This infamous girl thinks to have found a safe refuge with you ; but you are too sensible to blame my resentment. Allow me, I pray you, to treat her as she deserves.

DON P. Ah ! for pity's sake, stop. The offence is too trifling for so much anger.

ADR. The extent of the offence lies not in the importance of the deed : it is in the transgression of the given

orders ; and in such matters that which is only a trifle becomes very criminal when it is forbidden.

DON P. To judge by what she has said, all that she has done was unintentional ; and I pray you to be reconciled.

ADR. What ! you take her part, you who are so particular in matters of that kind.

DON P. Yes, I take her part ; and if you would oblige me, you will forget your anger, and be reconciled to each other. It is a favour which I ask of you, and I shall look upon it as an earnest of the friendship which I should like to subsist between us.

ADR. Under these conditions, I can refuse you nothing. I will do as you wish.

SCENE XVII.—Zaide, DON PEDRO, ADRASTE, *hidden in a corner of the stage.*

DON P. (*To Zaide*). Come along, I say. Only follow me, I have made your peace. You could not have fallen into better hands.

ZAI. I am much more obliged to you than you think ; but I shall take my veil ; I shall take care not to appear before him without it.

SCENE XVIII.—DON PEDRO, ADRASTE.

DON P. She will be here directly ; and I assure you that she seemed very glad when I told her that I had made it all right.

SCENE XIX.—ISIDORE, *with Zaide's veil*, ADRASTE,
DON PEDRO.

DON P. Since you have consented to forego your resentment, allow me to make you shake hands together here ; and to beg of you to live henceforth, for my sake, in a perfect understanding.

ADR. Yes, I promise you, that for your sake, I shall live on the best possible terms with her.

DON P. You oblige me greatly, and I shall bear it in mind.

ADR. I give you my word, Don Pedro, that out of con-

sideration for you, I shall treat her with the utmost possible kindness.

DON P. You are really too kind. (*Alone*). It does one good to make matters pleasant and peaceful. Hullo, Isidore, come.

SCENE XX.—ZAIDE, DON PEDRO.

DON P. What is this! What means this?

ZAI. (*Without her veil*). What means this? That a jealous man is a monster hated by all the world; and that everyone delights to annoy him for annoyance' sake; that all the locks and bolts cannot keep people; and that the heart must be won by gentleness and kindness; that Isidore is in the hands of a gentleman whom she loves, and that you have been duped.

DON P. And shall Don Pedro suffer this mortal insult! No, no, I have too much courage; and I shall go and demand the assistance of the authorities to punish this perfidy to the utmost.¹⁵ Here lives a senator. Hullo!

SCENE XXI.—A SENATOR, DON PEDRO.

SEN. Your servant, Don Pedro. How opportunely you come!

DON P. I come to complain to you of an insult which I have suffered.

SEN. I have just arranged the most beautiful masquerade in the world.

DON P. A treacherous Frenchman has played me a trick.

SEN. You have never, in all your life, seen anything so beautiful.

DON P. He has abducted a girl to whom I had given her freedom.

SEN. They are people dressed like Moors, who dance admirably.

DON P. You may judge whether this is an insult which I ought to bear.

SEN. Most marvellous dresses, made expressly.

¹⁵ If a ballet ends this play, the stage changes here again to the marketplace of the first scene. But when there is no ballet, the piece ends here.

DON P. I demand the assistance of the authorities in this matter.

SEN. I wish you to see this. They are going to rehearse it to amuse the people.

DON P. What are you talking about?

SEN. I am speaking about my masquerade.

DON P. I am speaking of my affair.

SEN. I will not occupy myself about any matter, except pleasure, to-day. Come, gentlemen, come. Let us see whether it will go all right.

DON P. Plague take the fool, with his masquerade!

SEN. The deuce take the bore, with his affair!

SCENE XXII.—A SENATOR, TROUP OF DANCERS.

Entry of the Ballet.

Several dancers, dressed as Moros, dance before the Senator, and finish the comedy.

TARTUFFE; OU L'IMPOSTEUR.

COMÉDIE.

TARTUFFE; OR, THE HYPOCRITE.

A COMEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

(*THE ORIGINAL IN VERSE.*)

AUGUST 5th, 1667.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

HYPOCRISY has at all times been a legitimate subject of satire in modern society. In classical literature, such a vice seems to have been unknown; for it can develop itself only in the midst of a society based, or pretending to be based, upon religion. Wherever indifference in matters of religion existed among the ancients, the hypocrite must have been rare; for his outward adornment of wise and moral saws could have been of no service to him. But as soon as religion became part and parcel of the State policy, men found it convenient and profitable to shelter their vices under a cloak of outward decorum, and tried to make the best of both worlds; but, above all, of this one. Literary men were not slow in describing this new character; and from the middle ages down to the present time, in all climes and in all countries, the hypocrite appears on the scene. He plays the principal part in the *Fabliaux*; and whether as an incontinent hermit, a lecherous chaplain, an intriguing monk, or a faithless confessor, he is always described in bold, but rather coarse, strokes, and gets generally punished and jeered at in the end. We find him in some of the early German satirical poems; and in the latter part of the epic, *Reynard the Fox*. Rutebeuf, a *trouvère* of the thirteenth century, gives us, in the *Chanson des Ordres*, the portrait of a Pharisee, who seems an ancestor of Tartuffe, and who goes about in a large plain woollen gown, with a thin and pale face, austere mien and words, and who has the ambition of a lion, the claws of a leopard, and the malice of a scorpion.

In the continuation of *The Romaunt of the Rose*, by Jean de Meung, appears Faux Semblaunt, an ancestor of Tartuffe, whom Chaucer, in his translation, makes speak as follows:

“ Now am I knight, now chastelaine,
Now prelate, and now chaplaine,
Now priest, now clerke, now fostere,
Now am I master, now schollere.
Now monke, now chanon, now baily,
What ever mister man am I
Well can I beare me under wede,
Unlike is my word to my dede.”

The conversation between Love and Faux Semblant is also from the same *Romaunt*, and shows the perfect hypocrite.

"Tell forth, and shame thee never adele,
For as thine habit sheweth wele,
Thou servest an holy hermite."
"Sooth is, but I am but an hypocrite,
Thou goest and preachest poverté?"
"Yea, sir, but Richesse hath poste,
Thou preachest abstinence also?"
"Sir, I woll fillen, so mote I go,
My paunche of good meat and wine
As should a maister of divine,
For how that I me poore fame,
Yet all poore folke I disdaine."

Boccaccio, in his *Decameron*, describes several times the hypocrite, and Machiavelli, in his play, the *Mandragore*, acted in 1515 before the Pope and his Court, sketches a monkish pander, who lays down, in rather broad language, the maxim that the intentions of a man are everything, and that his actions are nothing.

About the same time, there was played in France *la Farce des Brus*, in which friar Ancelot and friar Anselme are still more cynical than their prototype, friar Timoteo. . In the *Satyre Ménippée*, the hypocrite also appears, but full of sedition, and warlike. Mathurin Regnier describes, in the eighteenth of his *Satires*, Macette, a hypocritical lady, in the following words: "Night and day she goes from convent to convent, visits the holy places, confesses herself often. . . . She dwells and lives apart from the world; her penitent eyes weep only holy water." Such is her portrait: but this is what she herself says: "That is why I disguise the up-wellings of my heart, envelop my ardour in sackcloth and ashes, and hide my purpose, which is to abandon myself to pleasures. A concealed sin is half forgiven; the fault does not lie only in its being forbidden, but scandal and disgrace are the causes of the offence. Provided it be not known, no matter how, as long as we can deny it, we sin not at all. Moreover, the goodness of Heaven is greater than our offences, and provided we confess, we are always pardoned." The portrait is more odious, but is not very unlike *Tartuffe*.

In Pascal's *Provinciales*, the Jesuitical hypocrite is also well described. All this tends to prove that of *Tartuffe* can be said what may be stated of all masterpieces of the human intellect,—that it is the most finished and best expressed result of a series of more or less complete ideas, which, for ages, men have attempted to shape into a certain form.

Molière evidently owes something to a tragi-comic tale of Scarron, called *The Hypocrites*. In this tale, the author relates how a certain adventurer, called Montufar, and two queans, the younger of whom was named Helen, and the older Mendez, resolved to take advantage of the credulity of the inhabitants of Seville, by pretending to be devout.

"They alighted within a league of the city, and having satisfied the muleteer, got thither about the dusk of the evening, and took up their lodgings at the first inn they found. Montufar hired a house, furnished it with very ordinary furniture, and dressed himself all in black, with a cassock and cloak of the same colour. Helen assumed the habit of a religious sister, that had devoted herself to pious works, and Mendez went dressed like a saint, valuing herself upon her hoary locks, and a huge monstrous chaplet, each bead of which was big enough to load a demiculverin. The very next day after their arrival, Montufar showed himself in the street, apparelled as I have already described him, marching with his arms across,

and looking on the ground whenever he met any woman. He cried out, with a voice shrill enough to have rent a rock, 'Blessed be the holy sacrament of the altar, and the thrice happy conception of the immaculate virgin!' and uttered many more devout exclamations with the same everlasting lungs of leather. He made the children whom he met in the streets repeat the same words after him; and moreover, assembled them sometimes together, to teach them to sing hymns and songs of devotion, and to instruct them in their Catechism. He repaired to the gaols and preached to the prisoners, comforting some and relieving others, begging victuals and other provisions for them, and frequently walking with a heavy basket upon his back. O, detestable villain! thou wantedst nothing but to set up for a hypocrite, to be the most profligate accomplish'd rascal in the Universe. These actions of virtue, in a fellow that was the least virtuous of mankind, procur'd him in a little time the reputation of a saint. Helen and Mendez likewise did all that in them lay to deserve canonization. The one called herself the mother, the other the sister of the thrice blessed Friar Martin. They went every day to the hospitals, where they assisted the sick, made their beds, washed their linen, and did all this at their own expense. By these means the most vicious people in Spain obtained the universal admiration of all Seville. About this time, a gentleman of Madrid happened to come thither about some private affairs; he had formerly been one of Helen's lovers, for women of this character have commonly more than one string to their bow. He knew Mendez to be a notorious cheat, and Montufar to be no better. One day as they came out of church, encompassed by a great number of persons, who kissed their very garments, and conjur'd them to remember them in their prayers, they were known by the aforesaid gentleman; who, burning with a Christian zeal, and not able to suffer three such notorious impostors to abuse the credulity of the whole city, broke through the crowd, and giving a hearty box on the ear to Montufar, 'You wicked cheat,' cried he, 'do you neither fear God nor man?' He would have said more, but his good intention, which in truth was somewhat of the rashest, had not the success it deserved; all the people fell on him whom they believed to have committed sacrilege, in offering this violence to their saint. He was beaten to the ground, and had certainly been torn to pieces by the mob, had not Montufar, by a wonderful presence of mind, undertaken his protection by covering him with his body, keeping off those that were most enraged with him, and exposing himself to their blows. 'My brethren,' cried he to them as loud as he could bawl, 'let the poor wretch alone, for the love of God: be quiet, for the love of the blessed Virgin.' These few words having appeased this horrible tempest, the people made room for brother Martin to pass, who went up to the unfortunate gentleman, well-pleased in his heart to see him so used, though showing outwardly a mighty concern for him. He raised him up from the ground, embraced and kissed him, all covered as he was with blood and dirt, and reprimanded the people for their rude behaviour. 'I am a wicked man,' said he to the standers-by. 'I am a sinner; I am one that never did anything pleasing in the eyes of God. Do you believe,' continued he, 'because you see me dressed in this religious garb, that I have not been a robber all my life-time, the scandal of others and the destruction of myself? Alas! you are mistaken, my brethren, make me the mark of your contumelies, pelt me with stones, nay, draw your swords upon me.' Having spoken these words with a counterfeit sorrow, he threw himself, with a zeal yet more counterfeit, at the feet of his enemy, and kissed them, not only begged his pardon, but likewise gathered up his sword, cloak, and hat, which he had lost in the scuffle. He helped him on with them again, and leading him by the hand to the end of the street, took his leave of him, after he had bestowed abundance of embraces and as many benedictions on him. The poor man was, as it were, out of his wits at what he had seen, and with what had been done to him, and was so full of confusion that he durst hardly show his head all the while his affairs detained him at Seville. Montufar had won the hearts of all the city by this pretended act of devotion; the people gaz'd at him with admiration, and the children cried after him, 'a Saint, a Saint,' as they cried out 'a Fox, a Fox,' when they saw his enemy in the street. From this moment, he lived the happiest life in the world. Some nobleman, cavalier, magistrate, or prelate perpetually invited him to dinner, and strove who should have the most of his company. If he were asked his name, he would answer, 'He was a beast of burthen, a sink of filth, vessel of iniquity,' and such like noble attributes which his counterfeit devotion dictated to him. When he visited any of the ladies, he complained to them incessantly of the nothingness of his dispensation, and the deadness of the inward man, adding, he wanted concentration of heart and recollection of spirit. In short, he always talked to them in this magnificent cant and holy gibberish. No alms were given in Seville but what

passed through his hands, or those of Helen and Mendez, who were not wanting likewise to act their parts to admiration, and stood as fair for a red-letter pretermen in the almanack (I mean to be sainted) as Montufar himself. A lady of quality, who was a widow, and devout even to superstition, sent them every day two dishes of meat for dinner, and as many for supper; and you must know, these dishes were dressed by the very best cooks in Seville. Their house was too little to receive the numerous presents which were daily sent to them. A woman that had a mind to be with child put her petition into their hands, to the end, by their mediation, it might be presented to the tribunal of heaven. Another that had a son in the Indies did the same; as likewise a third that had a brother, prisoner in Algiers. Nay, the poor widow who had to contest with a powerful adversary before an ignorant or covetous judge, did not doubt the success of her cause, when she had once made a present to them according to her ability. Some gave them sweetmeats and preserves, others pictures and ornaments for their closets. Several charitable persons trusted them with great quantities of linen and woollen cloth to dispose among the needy that were ashamed to beg, and with considerable sums of money to distribute as they saw convenient. No one came to visit them empty-handed, and their future canonization was as firmly believed as an article of faith. At last the credulity of the people ran so high, that they came to consult them about their doubtful affairs and things to come. Helen, who was as subtle as a devil, managed all the answers, delivering her oracles in few words, and those capable of receiving different interpretations. Their beds were mean and homely; but at night, with all the fine furniture a man could desire, that loves to sleep deliciously, their house being plentifully furnished with good feather beds, fine coverlets, and, in short, with all sorts of movables that contribute to the convenience and pleasure of life; and all this they pretended was to be given to some poor widow, whose goods had been seized in execution, or to furnish some young woman's house who had married without any fortune. Their doors were shut up in winter at five, and in summer at seven o'clock, as punctually as in a well-regulated convent; and then Jack was wound up, the spits turned merrily round, the capons put down to the fire, the table handsomely spread, when our hypocritical triumvirate eat heartily, and drank plentifully to their own and the healths of those people they had cheated. Montufar and Helen lay together, for fear of spirits, and their footman and maid, that were of the same complexion, copied so pious an example. As for the good Mendez, she always lay alone, being more taken up with contemplation than with action ever since she had addicted herself to the black art. This was their constant practice, instead of employing their time in mental prayer or in doing penance. 'Tis no wonder if, living so jolly a life, they looked plump and fat; all the city blessed heaven for it, and were mightily surprised that persons of so much austerity and self-denial should look better than those that lived in luxury and ease. For the space of three years they deceived the eyes of all the inhabitants of Seville, and by receiving presents from everyone, and appropriating to their own use the alms that passed through their hands, they heaped together an incredible number of pistoles. All good success was ascribed to the efficacy of their prayers: they stood godfathers to all children, made matches for all the city, and were the common arbitrators of differences. At last, heaven was weary of conniving any longer at their impious lives. Montufar, who was choleric in his temper, used frequently to beat his valet, who could not bear it, and had quitted his service a hundred times, if Helen, who was more discreet than her gallant, had not prevented it by appeasing him with fair words and presents. One day, having drubbed him immoderately, for little or no reason, the boy got to the door, and blinded by his passion, ran directly to the magistrates to inform against these three hypocrites, whom the world took for saints. Helen's diabolical spirit foretold what would happen, therefore, divised Montufar to run off with all the gold they had in the house and retire to some place of security till this tempest, which threatened them, had spent itself. It was no sooner said than put into execution. they carried off the most valuable things, and walking down the street as unconcerned as if they had dreaded nothing, went out at one gate."¹

Twenty years after *Tartuffe* had been played, La Bruyère added, in the sixth edition of the *Caractères*, the portrait of Onuphre the hypocrite. We give it here below:

¹ Translated by Mr. Thomas Brown, Mr. Savage, and others London, 1727.

"Onuphre has no other bed but a cover of grey serge, but he sleeps upon cotton and down; he is also dressed simply but comfortably. I mean that he wears some very light clothing in summer, and some very soft and woolly in winter; he wears very fine shirts, which he takes very good care to hide. He does not say my hairshirt and my scourge; on the contrary, he would pass then for what he is, a hypocrite, and he wishes to pass for what he is not, for a devout man. It is true that he acts in such a manner that people believe, without his saying so, that he wears a hair-shirt, and that he flagellates himself. There are some books lying, all over his room, accidentally. Open them, they are *The Spiritual Combat*, *The Inward Christian*, *The Holy Year*; other books are under lock and key. If he walks through the town, and if he sees from afar a man before whom it is necessary that he should pretend to be religious, downcast eyes, a slow and modest gait, a collected air, are familiar to him; he plays his part. If he enters a church, he observes, to begin with, by whom he can be seen, and, according to what he has discovered, he kneels down and prays, or he neither thinks of kneeling down or of praying. If a good man, and one in authority, draws near to him, who can see and hear him, he not only prays but is lost in meditation; he has upheavings of the spirit, he sighs aloud; but if the good man goes away, the latter, who sees him depart, gets calmed down, and no longer utters a sound. Another time he enters a church, makes his way through the crowd, chooses a place where he can collect his thoughts, where every one can see how he humbles himself. If he hears courtiers talking or laughing, or who are less silent in church than in an ante-chamber, he makes more noise than they to get them to be silent; he begins again his meditation, which is always a comparison between those persons and himself, and by which he does not lose. He avoids an empty and solitary church, where he might hear two masses, one after another, and a sermon, attend vespers and compline,—all this between God and himself, and without anybody thanking him for it. He loves the parish church; he frequents churches where there are a great many people; people are sure not to come there for nothing: people are seen there. He chooses two or three days in the year, when, without any necessity whatever, he fasts or mortifies himself; but at the end of the winter, he coughs; there is something wrong in the chest; he is bilious; he has an attack of ague, people entreat, urge him, and even quarrel with him, so that he should not keep his fasts, when he has begun them, and he gives way out of complaisance. If Onuphre is named an umpire in a quarrel between relatives, or in a lawsuit amongst a family, he is on the side of the strongest, I mean the richest; and he cannot persuade himself that a man who has much wealth can be in the wrong. If he is on a good footing with a rich man, who is ignorant of his real character, whose parasite he is, and who may assist him very much, he does not cajole that rich man's wife; he makes her no advances, nor a declaration of his love; he will run away, he will leave his cloak behind him, if he is not as sure of her as he is of himself; he has not the least idea of employing devotional phrases to seduce her; he does not employ them usually; but on set purpose, and when they can be useful to him, and never when they would only serve to make him very ridiculous. He knows where to find more sociable and more docile females than the wife of his friend; he does not abandon them for long, even if it should only be to have it said that he has withdrawn from the world for some time. And who could have any doubts about it, when they see him make again his appearance with an emaciated countenance, and like a man who has mortified himself. More-

over, the women who flourish and prosper as devotees suit him, only with this small difference, that he neglects those who have grown old, and that he looks after the young ones, and amongst those the most beautiful and the best shaped; that is his attraction; they go away and he goes away; they return and he returns; they remain and he remains; he has the consolation of seeing them in every place and at every hour. Who would not be edified by that? They are pious and he is pious. He does not forget to take advantage of the blindness of his friend, and of the way he is prepossessed in his favour: now he borrows money from him; again he acts in such a manner that his friend offers it to him; his friends fall foul of him because he has no recourse to them when he is in want. Sometimes he will not receive a farthing without giving his note of hand for it which he is quite sure never to take up. Another time he states, and with a certain intonation, that he wants nothing, and that he does when he only wants a small sum; at some other time he praises publicly the generosity of a certain man, in order to work upon his friend's honour, and to induce him to put down a very large sum; he does not think of accaparing the whole of his succession, nor of obtaining a general donation of all his property, above all if the question is to take them away from a son, the lawful heir. A devout man is neither a miser, nor violent, nor unjust, nor even interested. Onuphre is not devout, but he wishes to be thought so, and through a perfect, though false imitation of piety, advances his interests in an underhand manner. He therefore does not come into collision with direct heirs; he never insinuates himself in a family where there is a daughter to be provided for, and a son to be established; their rights are too powerful and too inviolable; they cannot be infringed without public scandal, and that he fears; without such an undertaking coming to the ears of the prince, from whom he hides all his dealings, for fear of being discovered, and of appearing in his true character. He plots against collateral heirs, who can be attacked with more impunity; he is the terror of male and female cousins, of the nephew and the niece; the flatterer and the firm friend of every uncle who has made a fortune. He pretends to be the legitimate heir of every old man who dies rich and without children; and the latter must disinherit him if he wishes his relatives to receive what he leaves behind. If Onuphre does not find an opportunity to deprive them wholly of it, he takes at least a good part of it; a little slander, less than that, a trifling, slighting remark, suffices for that pious design, and such a talent he possesses in the highest degree of perfection; he often considers it his obligation not to let it lie by uselessly; according to him it is our duty to attack certain people; and these are the people whom he does not like, whom he wishes to harm, and whose spoils he longs for. He obtains what he wishes without even taking the trouble of opening his mouth; they speak to him of Eudoxe, he smiles or sighs; they ask some more questions, they insist that he should answer, he replies nothing; and he is right, he has said enough."

We can now compare La Bruyère's careful delineation of the hypocrite with Molière's masterly, life-like creation of him. There is no doubt, in my mind, that La Bruyère wished to correct his master; the mention he makes of "a hairshirt and a scourge, of a daughter to be provided for, and a son to be established," sufficiently prove this. But I do not think he has succeeded. La Bruyère has given an almost photographic sketch of the canting hypocrite such as he appeared in 1690; he has described to us his dress, his manners, his slang, and even the religious books then in vogue: but we feel all the time that Onuphre only pretends

to be religious, because it was then the fashion to be so, because the king gave the tone to the courtiers to be pious. In the following reign, Onuphre would have been most probably a *roué*, and exchanged his cloak of hypocrisy for a velvet jacket, adorned with gold lace; he would have forsaken the handsome pious young devotees to go and make his appearance at the suppers of the Regent. Onuphre is not a man: he is *only* an automaton, set in motion by every blast of court favour or disfavour; he is a model of a time-serving courtier. That La Bruyère may have thought so himself is not impossible, for Onuphre's portrait is to be found in the chapter on *Fashion* amongst the delineations of the amateur of flowers, the collector of engravings, the lover of birds; and immediately preceding it, is a sketch of a courtier. If the real hypocrite had been limned, his portrait would have found a place in the chapter *On Man*, or in that *On Judgments*.

But Molière gives us the hypocrite by nature, the man who would be a canting scoundrel, even if it did not pay; who cannot help being so; who is a human being, and therefore not perfect; who is a man, and thus sensually inclined; who employs certain means to subdue his passions, and to become a "whited sepulchre," but who gives all the more way to them when he imagines that he can do so with impunity. Even from a dramatic point of view, La Bruyère's portrait of a man whom nothing can move, who is always prudent and circumspect, is only possessed by one idea, has but a single object which he pursues, and who covers his vices with such an impenetrable veil, and is for ever so much on his guard that he can never be caught in a snare; would not make a character fit for the stage, and would disgust an audience. Besides, how could the arrant hypocrite be punished unless he fell in love, and that with the wife of his benefactor, for otherwise Orgon might perhaps have pitied him still and exclaimed "the poor man!"

Molière's Tartuffe is the hypocrite of all ages and for all times, who does not depend on the meretricious allurements of the court to become one, but who would be one, I am afraid, even in England, and at the present day. Pecksniff seems to me to be a relative of Tartuffe, although his cant is more about humanity, and less about religion. But I imagine Tartuffe to have been a man of a rather florid complexion, with "red ears and ruddy lips," inclined to be stout, with expressive eyes, and very beautiful, white, plump hands, of which he takes great care, and which he is very fond of showing. He is always well dressed in clothes of sombre hue; his linen is scrupulously white; his manners are gentlemanlike and insinuating; he is ever polite, but can be firm, and shows sometimes that he can be so; he is slow and impressive of speech, with an unctuous or rather oily flavour; he persuades now and then some hysterical females of defective education, but oftener terrifies the old and feeble-minded; he is a middle-aged man, of rather goodly shape, and capable of inspiring one of those semi-mystic, semi-sensual passions, of whose baneful existence evidence crops up at certain periods amongst so-called civilized nations. He certainly never can have been the low-bred, sniffling, caddish-looking, soddened, pasty-faced beadle, which is generally represented as his prototype on the stage. If Tartuffe had been such a man, he would not have obtained a footing at Orgon's house; and might have entertained the idea of courting a kitchen-wench or a scullery-maid, but would never have dared to attempt to seduce the virtuous and lady-like Elmire.

It has been stated that Molière, in delineating Tartuffe, intended to depict the Abbé de Rouquette, who became afterwards Bishop of Autun.

This town appears to have been unfortunate in its episcopal guides; for Talleyrand, was also for some time bishop of that place. But the identity of the Abbé de Rouquette with Tartuffe is more than doubtful, and rests on a tradition that M. de Guilleragues, who lived in the hotel of the Prince de Conti with the Abbé, must have communicated to Molière some of the latter's hypocritical tricks. According to others, Tartuffe's adventure with Elmire happened to the Abbé at the duchess de Longueville's house. The duchess de Longueville, a sister of the great Condé, had, at the time *Tartuffe* was first represented, only just become a widow, and was already forty-five years old, whilst the Abbé was four years younger. Although, therefore, it may have happened at the duchess's house, it is very unlikely to have occurred with that lady herself. The whole story appears doubtful; for at the death of the duchess, her relatives chose de Rouquette who, in the meantime had become Bishop of Autun, to preach her funeral sermon. This choice would not have been made if he had disgraced himself in any way at the noble lady's house. The Abbé preached so well, that Madame de Sévigné, who was present, wrote to her daughter: "He was not Tartuffe, he was not a pantaloon, but an eminent prelate." At another time, she wrote to the same: "We were obliged to go and dine with M. d'Autun. The poor man!" This only proves to my mind that Madame de Sévigné thought that the Abbé was like Tartuffe, but is no proof that Molière, in writing this comedy, intended to hit the rather worldly-minded Abbé, who is said to have been a great intriguer, and to have preached sermons which he did not write, if we may believe the following epigram, which circulated at that time:—

Sermons penned by other men,
Roquette preaches, people state;
I, who know where they are bought,
Say they are his, at any rate.

Another tradition, which rests upon even fewer grounds, mentions that Louis XIV., one evening during the campaign of 1662, just at the point of going to dine, advised Péréfixe, Bishop of Rhodéz, who had been the king's teacher, to do likewise. As it was a fast-day, the bishop said he was only going to take a slight meal. When he had retired, the king saw one of the bystanders smiling; and upon his asking him the reason of this, the latter replied that His Majesty need not be uneasy about M. de Rhodéz, and then told what he had seen the bishop eat for his dinner. At the mention of each dish, it is said that the king exclaimed each time, "The poor man!" and that Molière was present at this scene, and afterwards reminded Louis XIV., of it.

I can only say that all these traditions seem to me very unlikely. One thing is certain, that the noun Tartuffe is connected with the old French *truffe*, *truffle*, a truffle, and also a jest, a fib. In cognate languages, in the Italian *comedia dell' arte*, we find *Truffa* and *Truffaldino*, as rascally servants; in the Venetian, *Tofolo* and *Tiritofolo*, a stout but small knavish servant; in the Milanese dialect, we have *Tartuffol*; a dotard as well as a truffle; and in the Neapolitan tongue, *Taratufolo*, a simpleton.² All these seem to be connected with the low Latin word

² It is odd that *fungus*, in Latin, a mushroom, also means "a dolt;" so the Italian, *zucca*, a pumpkin, is employed in the same way. The French, *un melon*, *un concombre*, *un cornichon*, a garkin, and *une citronille*, a pumpkin, all vegetables which are watery and faint in taste, are often used to characterize a person of weak intellect.

truffactor, deceiver, with the augmentative *tra*: hence *trattuffar*, euphonically *trattuffar*. Perhaps Molière may have thought of some imaginary connection between the supposed erotic powers of the truffe, and the amateness of the hypocritical title-role of his play; but, in any case, he could have found the name *tartuffo* in *Il Malmantile racquistato*, a facetious Italian poem by Lorenzo Lippi, which circulated in manuscript in France, long before *Tartuffe* was performed. The author of the *Observations sur une comédie de Molière* (see Introductory Notice to *Don Juan*, which appeared after *Tartuffe*'s first three acts had been represented on the sixth day of the *Pleasure of the Enchanted Island*, always calls the hero of the piece Tartouffle. Montufar, the chief character in Scarron's tale, *The Hypocrites*, probably from the Spanish *tuso*, vapour, may also have partly led Molière to use the name of his hero. In an old French translation of Platina's *De Honesta Voluptate*, published in 1505, *truffe* and *tartuffe* are used as synonymous words for hypocrites; and Molière, in his first petition to the King, speaks of the *tartuffes*, meaning the impostors,—not using the word as a personal, but as a generic name.

We have already said that the first three acts of *Tartuffe* were first performed at Versailles, on the 12th of May 1664, and that the king forbade it to be given to the public; for, in the official *Gazette* of the 17th of the same month, we find:—"This great monarch is careful to cut off all the seeds of division in the Church, and none of his predecessors bore ever more gloriously the title of its Eldest Son, which he keeps up by that delicacy which he shows for everything which regards it, as he has shown it lately by his prohibiting the performance of a comedy, called *The Hypocrite*, which His Majesty, piously enlightened in everything, judged absolutely injurious to religion, and capable of producing very dangerous effects."

The King was staying at Fontainebleau from the 16th of May until the 13th August of the same year (1664), and it was during that time that the Vicar of St. Barthélemy, Pierre Roulès (see Prefatory Memoir, Vol. I., presented to the King his pamphlet: *Le Roi glorieux au monde, ou Louis XIV., le plus glorieux de tous les rois du monde*. In this pamphlet, which is full of flattery—I had nearly said idolatry—of Louis XIV., Molière is attacked. I shall give first, as a curiosity, a passage in which the King is sufficiently bespattered with praise: "There are certainly, on the whole earth we live on, sufficient kings, but few who are, and who can be qualified, and really be called glorious kings. But amongst all, and even if they should be numberless, Louis XIV., who reigns in France, has the happiness and glory of belonging to them. And to know that he is in that position, and to be convinced of honouring him with respect in this supreme and royal quality and dignity, what else is necessary but to behold his grandeur and glory, the lustre and the brilliant splendour of his virtues; the lofty elevation of his power, and his very great merits, and the esteem in which they are held, or otherwise to measure him by his countenance; but I make a mistake, by the highest perfection amongst all the other kings of the whole world. I am not ignorant that comparisons are odious, that it is not a title to consideration, nor a very glorious advantage to be grand and eminent, only because others are disparaged and valued less highly. I desire, therefore, not to raise the lofty and eminent glory of Louis XIV., by despising and lowering every one, but by this characteristic that he has the honour of being the master and the sovereign of all things, which,

without being idolators, we worship and reverence publicly in his royal Majesty, because he is a terrestrial god and a divine man, without example and without equal, having nothing to struggle against or to dispute with except himself."

I think this laudation is sufficiently nauseous. Let us see now what this pious vicar has to say for Molière :—"A man, or rather, a demon incarnate and dressed like a man, the greatest unbeliever and free-thinker that ever existed even in past ages, possessed sufficient impiety and abomination to draw out of his diabolical mind a play quite ready to become public, in having it represented upon a stage, to make a mockery of the whole Church, to condemn the most sacred character and the most divine function and that which is most holy in the Church. . . . He deserved for this sacrilegious and impious attempt a final, exemplary and public punishment, and even the stake, a fore-runner of the fires of hell, to expiate so heinous a crime of high-treason against Heaven, which aims at destroying the Catholic religion, in criticising and jeering at its most religious and holy practices. . . . But His Majesty, after having given him a severe reprimand, and animated by a just wrath, has, by a trait of his usual clemency, in which he imitates the essential gentleness of God, condescendingly forgiven him his insolence and his demoniacal boldness, in order to give him time to repent of it publicly and solemnly all his life. And to stop successfully the exposition and the sale of his impious and irreligious production, and of his licentious and free-thinking poetry, he has commanded him, under pain of death, to suppress and tear up, to hush up and burn all that was written of it."

Although this language was pretty strong, it did not prevent the troupe of Molière from being invited to come to Fontainebleau, to contribute to the amusements presented to Monsignore Chigi, the Pope's Nuncio. They remained there from the 21st of July to the 13th of August, and it appears that, during that time, Molière read to the Nuncio *Tartuffe*, and that the Nuncio did not disapprove of it. He then presented to Louis XIV., the following petition :

Sire,³—The aim of comedy being to correct men by amusing them, I thought that in the situation which I occupy,⁴ I could not do better than attack by pictures full of ridicule the vices of my age; and hypocrisy being no doubt not only one of the most usual among them, but also one of the most annoying as well as most dangerous, I had the idea, Sire, that I would be rendering not a small service to the honest people of your kingdom, if I wrote a comedy that should decry the hypocrites, expose plainly the studied grimaces of those ultra-godly people, all the covert scoundrelism of these false coiners of devotion, who try to inveigle people with their counterfeit zeal, and their sophistical charity.

I have constructed this comedy, Sire, with all the care, and, as I believe, with all the circumspection demanded by the delicacy of the material; and the better to preserve the esteem and respect due to the truly pious, I have distinguished as much as I could the character which I had to sketch. I have left no room for equivocal interpretation, I have left out everything that could confound the good with the bad, and have employed in this picture only those express colours and essential traits which would serve to reveal, at the first glance, the veritable and downright hypocrite. Nevertheless, all my precautions have been useless. People have taken advantage, Sire, of the delicacy of your feelings on the subject of religion, and have succeeded in probing you in your only vulnerable spot, I mean

³ This petition is a reply to the pamphlet *Le Roi glorieux au monde*, and is often quoted by de Rochemont in his *Observations* (see Introductory Notice to *Don Juan*, Vol. II.)

⁴ This situation was that of manager of the troupe of the theatre of the Palais Royal.

your respect for sacred things. The Tartuffes on the sly, have been artful enough to find grace in your Majesty's sight; in short, the originals have caused the copy to be suppressed, no matter how innocent and startlingly like it may have been.

Great as was the blow caused by the suppression of this work, my misfortune has been mitigated by the manner in which your Majesty explained yourself on this subject;⁵ and I have seen, Sire, that all cause of complaint was taken away from me, when you declared kindly that you found nothing objectionable in this comedy, which you nevertheless forbade me to produce in public.

But notwithstanding this glorious declaration of the greatest and most enlightened monarch in the universe, even notwithstanding the approbation of Monsignor the Nuncio, and the majority of our prelates, who, when I privately read my work to them, have all fully concurred in the sentiments of your Majesty,—notwithstanding all this, I say, a book has been published which openly contradicts all those august testimonies.⁶ Your Majesty may say what he pleases, the Nuncio and the prelates may proclaim their judgment as much as they like, my comedy, without having even been seen, is diabolical, and as diabolical is my brain; I am a demon incarnate, and dressed like a man, an unbeliever, an impious wretch, deserving of exemplary punishment. It is not enough that the flames expiate my offence in public, I should be quit of it at too cheap a rate; the charitable zeal of this gallant and good man hardly cares to stop there; he requires that I shall find no mercy at the hands of God, he insists absolutely that I must be damned; that is a settled affair.

This book, Sire, has been presented to your Majesty, and you can yourself doubtless judge how annoying it is to me to see myself daily exposed to the insults of these gentlemen; the harm these slanders do me in the eyes of the world, whether they are to be meekly borne, and the interest I have to rid myself of its imposture, and to show the public that my comedy is nothing less than what it is said to be. I shall not say anything, Sire, about the claims due to my reputation, or to the justification of the innocence of my work in the eyes of the world; enlightened Kings, like you, have no need to have people's wishes pointed out to them; they perceive, like God, our wants, and know better than we do, what they ought to grant us.⁷ It is sufficient for me to place my interests in your Majesty's hands, and to await respectfully from him whatever he may be pleased to ordain on the subject.

Although the King did not yet allow *Tartuffe* to be performed in public, the first three acts were played, by order of Monsieur, the only brother of the King, on the 25th of September 1664, at Villers-Cotterets, before the King and the whole court; and the complete comedy, in five acts, was played at Raincy, the seat of the Princess Palatine, and by order of the Prince de Condé, on the 29th of November 1664, and on the 8th of November of the following year. During all this time Molière's influence at court had been strengthened; the *Misanthrope* had been successfully played; he had contributed during the winter, 1666-1667, several comedies to the *Ballet des Muses*, and when, in the summer of the latter year, the King set out for his campaign in Flanders, Molière, reckoning upon a verbal authorization of Louis, brought out *Tartuffe* at the Palais-Royal, on the 5th of August 1667, under the name of *The Impostor*. Tartuffe became a layman, and was called Panulphe; he wore a little hat, long hair, a large collar, a sword, and lace all over his coat; whilst some passages were altogether suppressed or toned down. But the next day the play was forbidden by order of the first President of the Parliament of Paris, M. de Lamoignon. On the 8th of the same month, two actors of Molière's troupe, La Grange and La Thorillière, started off in a post-chaise, in order to go and present to the King, who was at that time before Lille, the following petition:

⁵ See Introductory Notice to the *Princess of Elis*.

⁶ This refers to *Le Roi glorieux au monde*, and Molière quotes all the phrases from that pamphlet.

⁷ Molière imitates here the language of his accuser de Roules.

SIRE.—It is a very bold step on my part to come and trouble a great monarch in the midst of his glorious conquests; but in the position in which I am, Sire, where am I to find protection except in the place where I have come to seek for it? And what am I to invoke against the authority of the power that overwhelms me, unless it be the source of that power and authority, the just dispenser of the absolute commands, the sovereign judge, and the master of all things.

Until now, Sire, my comedy has not met with your Majesty's favor. In vain have I produced it under the title of *The Impostor*, and disguised the personage beneath the garb of a man of the world;⁸ vainly have I given him a small hat, long hair, a great collar, a sword, and lace over the whole of his dress; in vain have I modified it in several places, and carefully cut out everything that I deemed could furnish the shadow of a pretext to the celebrated originals of the portrait I wanted to paint; all has been of no use. The cabal has re-awoke at the simple conjectures which they may have had about the matter. They have found means to surprise minds, who, on any other subject, profess never to allow themselves to be surprised.⁹ No sooner did my comedy appear than it has found itself struck down by the blow of a power which is entitled to respect; and all I have been able to do in this struggle, in order to save myself from the burst of this tempest, was to say that your Majesty had had the kindness to allow me the representation, and that I did not think there was any need to ask this permission from others, seeing that it was your decree only which had prohibited it.

I doubt not, Sire, that the people whom I depict in my comedy will employ many artifices with your Majesty, and will try to enlist among their party many truly pious, who are the more susceptible of being deceived, because they judge others by themselves. They have the knack of investing their intentions with most beautiful colours. Whatever face they may put upon them, it is not really God's interest that causes them to move in this; they have shown this sufficiently well in the comedies which they have allowed so often to be played in public without saying a word about them. Those only attacked piety and religion, for which they care very little; but this one attacks and shows them up personally, and that is what they cannot tolerate.¹⁰ They cannot forgive me for having unmasked their impostures to the eyes of the whole world; and, doubtlessly, they will not fail to tell your Majesty that everybody has been scandalized at my comedy. But the real truth, Sire, is that all Paris has only been scandalized at the prohibition of it; that the most scrupulous have found the representation of it most salutary; and that people have been astonished that persons of such well-known probity should show such great deference for those whom the whole world ought to hold in horror, and should be so opposed to that true piety which they profess.

I await respectfully the verdict which your Majesty will deign to pronounce upon this subject; but certain is it, Sire, that I must no longer think of writing comedies, if the Tartuffes should gain the day, because they will, through this, assume the right to prosecute me more than ever, and find something to cavil at in the most innocent things that will fall from my pen.

May your kindness, Sire, vouchsafe to protect me against their venomous hatred! and permit me to hope that at your return from so glorious a campaign, I may be able to divert your Majesty after the fatigues of your conquests, to provide you with some innocent pleasures after such noble works, and to make the monarch smile who caused all Europe to tremble.¹¹

⁸ This pre-supposes that Molière intended to make originally a clergyman of Tartuffe.

⁹ Molière speaks here of the first President of the Parliament of Paris, M. de Lamoignon, who had forbidden *Tartuffe* to be played.

¹⁰ This phrase is nearly word for word what the Prince de Condé replied to Louis XIV. with regard to *Scaramouch, a hermit*. In the preface to *Tartuffe*, which was printed two years after this petition had been presented, Molière names the Prince (see page 143).

¹¹ The following is the mode in which the *Registres de la Comédie-Française*, (see Introductory Notice to *The Impromptu of Versailles*, Vol. I) record the presentation of this petition: "The following day, the 6th, a tipstaff, from the Court of Parliament, came in the name of the first President, M. de Lamoignon, to forbid the piece. The 8th, the Sieur de la Thorillière and I. de la Grange, started by post from Paris to obtain an audience from the King respecting said prohibit. His Majesty was at the siege of Lille in Flanders, where we were very well received. *Monsieur* gave us his protection as usual, and His Majesty sent us word that, at

On the 11th of August of the same year (1667) there appeared an order of Hardouin, Archbishop of Paris, addressed to all the vicars and curates of Paris and the suburbs, "forbidding all persons of our diocese to represent, read, or hear read the above mentioned comedy (*Tartuffe*), either publicly or privately, under any name or pretext whatever, and that under pain of excommunication." On the 20th of the same month, there was published a *Lettre sur la comédie de l'Imposteur*, which has sometimes been attributed to Molière himself, but which bears no marks of his style or of his clearness of expression. It is possible, however, that one of his friends may have written it, and brought forward some of the author's arguments, but not in Molière's words. This letter, which is rather prolix, begins with a careful and interesting analysis of the play, well worth reading, even at the present time, and which shows the alterations which it underwent since its first representation, and ends with two reflections—the first, that some people think that the religious subjects should never be mentioned on the stage. The author combats this opinion by stating that "religion is only the perfection of reason, at least as regards morality; that it purifies and elevates it, that it dispels only the darkness which sin has spread in the place where it dwells; in short, that religion is only a more perfect reason." He further argues that though "religion has its places and times fixed for its sacrifices, its ceremonies, and its other mysteries, . . . its truths, expressed in words, belong to all times and all places;" that the ancients never scrupled to produce their gods upon the stage, and that in early times Passion-plays were represented. His second reflection is that this comedy has given a fatal blow to what is called "solid gallantry," and that "though preachers thunder against it, confessors reprove it, pastors threaten, well constituted minds lament it, parents, husbands, and masters incessantly watch over it, and labour continually and strenuously in vain to check the impetuous torrent of impurity which desolates France; it is, however, considered ridiculous amongst fashionable people not to be carried away by it; and that some glory not more in loving incontinency than others in reproving it."

Lille surrendered on the 27th of August. Louis XIV. returned to Saint Germain on the 7th of September; but no permission was given to play *Tartuffe*, and on the 25th of September, 1667, the theatre of the Palais-Royal opened with *The Misanthrope*. But during the last months of the year, Molière did not play. I suppose he exemplified the truth of the saying, "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick." He played again, however, in the beginning of the year 1668, had *Amphitryon* performed on the 13th of January, *George Dandin* and *The Miser* in the same year. At last, after two years' waiting, and after *Tartuffe* had been read repeatedly at the houses of the principal nobility and gentry, and been played anew, on the 20th of September, 1668, at Chantilly, the seat of the Prince de Condé, in the presence of Monsieur and his wife, permission was granted to play it; and on the 5th of February, 1669, it appeared for the first time before the public. That very day, Molière sent to the King the following petition:—

SIRE.—A most respectable physician,¹² whose patient I have the honour to be,

his return to Paris, he would have the comedy of *Tartuffe* examined, and that we should play it. After this, we came back. The journey cost a thousand francs to the company. They did not play during our voyage, and we resumed acting the 25th September.

¹² His name was Mauvillain, according to Grimarest. It was in speaking of Mauvillain that Louis XIV. said one day to Molière: "You have got a physician,

promises me, and will bind himself by a legal act, executed before a notary, to make me live thirty years longer if I can procure him a favour of your Majesty. In answer to his promise, I have told him that I do not want as much, and that I would be satisfied if he would only promise me not to kill me. This favour, Sire, is a canonry in your royal palace of Vincennes, vacant through the death of . . .

May I still venture to ask this favour of your Majesty, the very day of the great resurrection of Tartuffe, resuscitated by your kindness? I am, through this first favour, reconciled with the devotees; and through the second, I shall be reconciled with the doctors. For me it is, no doubt, too many favours at one time, but perhaps it is not too many for your Majesty; and I await, with a little respectful expectation, the answer to my petition.

The *Tartuffe* was a great success, and was played nearly forty-four consecutive times at the Palais-Royal, before crowded houses, besides five times at noblemen's seats.

At the end of the year 1669, appeared a little piece, in one act, and in verse, called *La Critique du Tartuffe*, which seems never to have been played, and preceded by a satire, also in verse, in which Pradon, the great enemy of Boileau, appears to have had a hand. In it, is stated that the great success of Molière's play was owing to its having been forbidden so long. In the *Critique* itself, it is said that "he steals from a thousand authors, Spanish nonsense, but the age allows it, and in spite of all my sense; the poor man! . . . I pardon him."

The storms that were now raised against *Tartuffe* originated chiefly with the clergy. Bourdaloue, in his sermon for the seventh Sunday after Easter—preached in 1669—pretends that "as true and false piety have a great number of actions in common, and as the external appearances of both are almost wholly similar, the traits with which false religion are depicted harm the true one." This, he says, happens "when they put upon the stage and expose to public mockery an imaginary, or even, if you like, a real hypocrite, and, by portraying him, turn into ridicule the holiest things, the fear for the judgments of God, the horror against sin, the most praiseworthy and the most Christian practices in themselves."¹³

It may not be amiss to state here that Bossuet, in the *Maximes et Réflexions sur la Comédie*, which were written in answer to the *Lettre d'un*

what does he do to you?" "Sire," answered Molière, "we chat together; he prescribes remedies; I do not take them, and I get better." M. Maurice Raynaud, in *les Médecins au temps de Molière*, says: "Mauvillain had numerous friends amongst the Faculty. He showed some talents as professor of botany, and later, assisted Fagon in the *Hortus regius*. The theses defended, whilst he was president, and inspired by him, possess generally a twofold character. They either are in praise of chemistry,—and here we recognize a former pupil of Montpellier, wholly devoted to the prescribing of many drugs, praising the singular virtues of the rhinoceros' horn, of the sapphire, the emerald, the bezoar, and above all, of antimony, and making great fun of the antiquated partisans of senna and syrup of pale roses,—or are about some facetious subject like: *An pallidis virginum coloribus Venus*, giving scope to all kinds of equivocal sayings or broad jokes, told in very good Latin. All this seems to show us a man of very independent character, very jovial, very irritable, naturally inclined to opposition, and, in the quarrels of the school of medicine, acting the part of the leader of a party." Molière obtained the canonry he asked for the son of this physician. Let me draw attention to the free and easy style in which Molière addresses the King.

¹³ Bourdaloue seems not to have remembered the saying of Cléante (Act i., Scene 6) to Orgon—"There are hypocrites in religion as well as pretenders to courage. . . . I know no character more worthy of esteem than the truly devout, nor anything in the world more noble or beautiful than the holy fervour of sincere piety: so I know nothing more odious than the whited sepulchre of a pretended zealot."

Théologien, translated into French from the Italian of Father Caffaro, a Sicilian Theatine monk, defending the stage, and which *Maximes* were only published in 1694, twenty years after Molière's death, attacks Molière, and says: "we must then consider as honest the impieties and infamies with which the comedies of Molière are filled, and not count amongst the pieces, represented in the present times, those of an author who died, so to speak, before our eyes, and who even now fills the stage with the coarsest equivoques, with which the ears of Christians have ever been poisoned. . . . Only think if you will dare to maintain before Heaven plays in which virtue and piety are always ridiculed, corruption always excused and always made laughable." And speaking of Molière's death, that same eminent and charitable divine says: "Posterity will know, perhaps, the end of this author and comedian, who, in performing his *Malade Imaginaire*, or his *Médecin par force*, received the last stroke of that illness of which he died a few hours later, and passed from the jokes upon the stage, amongst which he almost breathed his last sigh, before the tribunal of Him who has said, 'Woe unto you that laugh now, ye shall weep.'"

The purpose of Molière's play is most powerfully defended by himself in his preface; and that he is now considered as having been right, is proved by its having taken a permanent place on nearly every European stage; at least the stage of every country where hypocrites are found, men who use religion as a cloak in order to further their own personal or carnal designs.

The skill with which Molière has drawn the hypocrite of his time, a sensualist and a casuist, and the way in which, during two acts, he prepares and leads up to his appearance, are very great. Tartuffe's first scene with Elmire is described in plain, but not indelicate, language, of which the truth is for all ages; it is only surpassed by Tartuffe's second scene with Orgon's wife, in which he begins to show his suspicion, is extremely cautious and guarded, but at last, blinded by passion, falls into the trap laid for him. The blasphemous cant used by the hypocrite when he bares what he calls his soul in order to poison the air with the expression of his foul wishes, and at last says that "the greatest offence of sin lies in scandal and riot, but that it is no sin if you sin by stealth," is, and will be true at all times. The credulity of Orgon is thought by some to be very improbable; but can we go through the world without seeing every day examples of it? If there were no credulous people, how could political, religious, legal, medical, financial, commercial, and I am sorry to say, literary quacks, thrive now-a-days so wonderfully well! The impetuous Damis, the sensible, clear-headed Céante, the plain-spoken waiting-maid Dorine, the bigoted, infatuated Madame Pernelle, and the modest Elmire, are all drawn with masterly hand, and bear the impress of the genius which created them.

It may be interesting to give Napoléon I.'s opinion about *Tartuffe*, and about its performance having been prohibited: "After dinner," says Las-Cases in the *Mémorial de Saint Hélène*, "the Emperor read *Tartuffe* to us, but he was so tired that he could not finish it; he put down the book, and after having paid a just tribute of praises to Molière, he ended in a manner we did not expect, and said, 'Certainly the whole of *Tartuffe* is masterly; it is one of the best works of an inimitable man; however, this comedy has such a character that I am not at all astonished that its appearance upon the stage has been the subject of repeated negotiations at Versailles, and of much hesitation in the mind of Louis XIV. If I am

astonished at anything, it is that the king allowed it to be performed. In my opinion it presents religious feeling under colours so odious; a certain scene is so decidedly and completely indecent, that, as regards myself, I do not hesitate to say that if that comedy had been written in my time, I would not have permitted it to be brought out."

M. Eugène Despois, the learned editor of Molière's plays, now in course of publication in Paris, says in *Le Théâtre français sous Louis XIV.* that only since *Don Juan* and *Tartuffe* had been performed, did the clergy act rigidly against plays and actors, and brought into use laws which had long lain dormant. He also makes in the same book the following remarks about *Tartuffe*: "When we speak of this immortal picture of hypocrisy, we must at least be ourselves sincere, and not pretend to be astonished at the storm of anger raised by this comedy. It might be indeed supposed that only the Tartuffes were irritated, and that whoever said anything against that play showed himself a hypocrite. We do not know precisely what were the intentions of Molière, and if he himself knew them; but could he have any illusion about the import of his play? Nearly all those distinctions which Molière made between true and false devotion, and which are still repeated about this comedy, disappeared; and just as Molière, in attacking much less serious things, the pretended *Précieuses*, might indeed expect that the real *Précieuses* would feel themselves attacked, so this twofold caricature of a sincere religious feeling in Orgon, and a lying religious feeling in Tartuffe, gave rise to comparisons which Molière ought to have foreseen. We must be honest. I ask every sincere believer, whatever his creed may be—religious, philosophical, or political—would he be glad to see an opportunity given to his adversaries of confounding too easily what may be respectable in the convictions of some, comical or odious in those of others? Let us abandon for a moment the opinions which separate us; there is one, at least, which unites us all, at least in theory—patriotism, which has also its Orgons and Tartuffes. What sincere patriot would not see an inconvenience in the pouring of the abuses, the absurdities, and even the hypocrisy of patriotism, at least as each one understands it for himself and his party? A sincere man, if he is accustomed to scrutinize his conscience, finds it difficult enough to understand the ideas of others, which he does not share, and expects to meet the same prepossessions, and to hear the name of calculated hypocrisy given to what perhaps is only his weakness or inconsistency. Yes, Bourdaloue and others, just as little suspected of resembling *Tartuffe*, had a right to be scandalized, and to consider that comedy dangerous. These cursory remarks are made only to excuse prepossessions, which were but too natural, and not an intolerance, and above all calumnies, which are never to be excused."

I shall only remark on this, that if the stage is intended "to hold the mirror up to nature," there can be no harm in showing up hypocrites, either social, religious, philosophical, or political. The real honest believer, the true philosopher, or the sincere patriot, are in nowise affected by these caricatures. As regards tolerance for the opinions of others, which we do not share, this is a question of philosophy, but has nothing to do with comedy, or, if it has, it tends to destroy all comedy, which is nearly always the exposition of a folly, or of a vice made ridiculous; or, as Molière himself says in *The Impromptu of Versailles*,¹⁴ "the business of comedy is to represent, in a general way, all the faults of men, and especially of men of our day."

¹⁴ See *The Impromptu of Versailles*, Vol. I., Scene iii. See also what Molière says in the same play about the subjects for Comedy, p. 458.

Monsieur Paul Albert, in his excellent work, *La Littérature française au 17^e siècle*, says: "The endings of Molière's plays have often been criticised. As a general rule, he does not seem to care sufficiently about them; they arrive a little at haphazard, and because the play must have some ending or other. Some even are very far-fetched, and quite contrary to all rules of art, as, for example, the intervention of the *exempt* in *Tartuffe*. I do not know how the critics manage to get Molière out of this scrape, but I should like to be allowed to venture upon an explanation. The compulsory ending of every Tragedy is the violent death of one of the personages; the compulsory ending of every Comedy is a marriage: that was traditional, and exists even at the present time. As marriage was considered a happy ending, every comedy was to end well. But this could only happen when the hero, the very centre of the play, and the pivot on which the action turns, was either conquered, or would suddenly change his determination. In reality, he appears from the very first scenes as the most serious, the only obstacle to the union of the youthful lover and the fair object of his love. He is opposed to it because his ruling passion, his egotism, is not satisfied by it. The Citizen who apes the Nobleman, the Miser, the Hypochondriac, the Blue Stocking, the Devotee, repel a son-in-law who would not suit their daughter, because they wish for a son-in-law who would suit themselves, a noble, a rich man, a physician, a pedant, a devotee. How can one conquer that resistance, destroy that tyranny? Let us look at society: How are things going on there? At the present time, a young girl who is persecuted to marry some one whom she does not love, can always say 'nay' at the last moment, and the law protects her as well as it can; as soon as she is twenty years old, she can say 'yes' to whomsoever she likes, and without consulting any one.¹⁵ It was not thus in the seventeenth century; it was necessary to yield or to enter a convent. This was one of the darkest sides of that society so much lauded. At every stage of it we find despotism. What has the comic poet to do? The rules of his art compel him to end his play with a marriage; but the reality which he has before his eyes gives the lie to the theory. Neither Orgon, M. Jourdain, Argan, nor Philaminte yield; the young girls are sacrificed. Is it moreover likely that, in so unequal a struggle, victory should belong to the weaker? The parents have on their side authority, custom, the inflexibility of a foregone conclusion, the violence of an exclusive passion; the poor child has only her tears and entreaties; very eloquent, it is true, and which, for one moment, move the hearts of the cruel parents, but the sacrifice is at last accomplished. Between the theatrical law, which prescribed a happy ending, and the social law, which presented another, Molière was obliged to take the first; but he took it so unwillingly, and so grumpily, if we may say so, that we can perceive that the second ending seemed to him to be the only true one. Here the thinker betrays himself, and the work, outwardly so light and lively, discovers gloomy depths. It seems that Molière cries to us: 'Do not believe in these happy endings; you see that they are unlikely, impossible. No, the officer will not interfere to prevent Orgon from being

¹⁵ Before the first French Revolution, marriage in France could take place only in church, and the priest could refuse or grant it; now only the civil marriage is legal. But every child, whose parents are alive, must have their permission even now (1877), before he or she can legally marry; and only when a young man is twenty-three and a young girl twenty years old, can they compel their parents to give them that permission, by sending to them a legal officer with what is oddly enough called *une sommation respectueuse*.

robbed, or Tartuffe from entering the house into which she has stolen, or, perhaps, even the bed of the daughter of his victim. Tartuffe is stronger than Orgon; Tartuffe will triumph. The fire from heaven will not fall upon Don Juan; the old legend says so, but Don Juan will quietly continue the course of his acts of scoundrelism, only he will put on the mask of religion, and, after having frightened people, he will edify them in order to deceive them better. The hypochondriac will not become a physician; that is a funny excuse which I have imagined to rid myself of a difficulty; he will take Diafoirus as his son-in-law, who will physic him for nothing. The Citizen who apes the Nobleman will not be taken in by the farce of the Mamamouchi: he will give his daughter to a friend of Dorante, to some ruined nobleman, who will ruin him, and laugh at him. Above all, do not believe that Célimène's gallants will leave her, indignant at her coquettish actions; Célimène shall always have plenty of followers; the more treacherous she is, the greater will be the desire to please her; Alceste will come back the first, will throw himself at her feet, and beg her pardon; she will only know solitude when she will be old and wrinkled. Justice is not of this world, sincerity is not of this world; the strong and the wicked devour the good and the meek. Perhaps a poet will be born one day who will dare to show to society, society such as it is, but that day is yet far off! I moralize and make fun as well as I can, about marriage, which is everything; in two hundred years people will moralize still, but will no longer make fun. You shall behold your miseries face to face, and that will kill all joy in you. Has Molière gone as far as this? I do not know. Who can pretend to set limits to the man who has written *The Misanthrope, Tartuffe, Don Juan*? For the last two hundred years the critics turn these strange works in and out, and in all directions, and have come to no conclusion as yet."

Goethe says, in his *Conversations*, "a piece to be so constructed as to be fit for the theatre, must be symbolical, that is to say, each incident must be significant in itself, and lead to another still more important. The *Tartuffe* of Molière is, in this respect, a great example. Only think what an introduction is the first scene! From the very beginning, everything is highly significant, and leads us to expect something still more important which is to come . . . ! that of the *Tartuffe* comes only once into the world . . . it is the greatest and best thing that exists of the kind."

In another part of his works, the great German author says: "The *Tartuffe* of Molière makes us hate him; he is a criminal who pretends, like a hypocrite, to be pious and moral, in order to ruin completely an honest family; the ending by a police officer is therefore quite natural, and very well received. Latterly, this piece has been played again, and brought forward, because it served to show the underhand dealings of a certain class of men who threatened to pervert Government. It was not the beauty and genius of the work which were felt and applauded; the play was only a hostile weapon; the different parties were engaged, the one wished to destroy the evils which the other tried to spread. That which appeared striking in the piece, was that the subject is still of the day, and that it will never lose its effect, on account of the art with which it has been treated."

Molière had the *Tartuffe* printed at his own cost, and corrected or wrote it so carefully, that there is hardly any difference between the first and the three following editions of this comedy.

The German dramatist, Karl Gutzkow, wrote in 1844, a comedy in five acts, and in prose, called *Das Urbild des Tartuffe* (*The Exemplar of Tar-*

tuffe), of which he admits that he planned it chiefly with a view to the circumstances which then took place in Germany, and to the severe measures which the Government and police took, at that time, to suppress all obnoxious ideas in print. With the exception of a complete neglect of all historical accuracy, this play is very good, and the intrigue depends chiefly on the interdiction to play the *Tartuffe*. The president, La Roquette, is the model of a *Tartuffe*, and he employs all the means in his power to prevent Molière's play from being performed. Molière, Louis XIV., and the minister of police, Lionne, are also chief characters in the German play, as well as La Chapelle, who, according to Gutzkow, is not the friend, but an envious enemy, of Molière. The King is in love with Armande Béjart, who is engaged to be married to Molière; he refuses his consent to the performance of *Tartuffe*, because he has been informed that the expected profits of the comedy will serve for the buying of the trousseau of Armande. He gives his consent at last, because the actress has promised to wear a blue neckerchief, if she will lend a favourable ear to his wishes, and in the contrary case a yellow one; and *Tartuffe* is the only play which is ready to be acted, in which she can wear a neckerchief. In the fifth act, which takes place in the ante-chamber of the King's private box in the theatre, Molière wears the dress of La Roquette, and is mistaken for him, whilst the president is mistaken for the actor; Armande refuses to listen to Louis XIV., who consoles himself with the thought of encouraging, in his own peculiar way, the budding talents and charms of her younger sister, Madeleine. *Tartuffe* is a success, and the hypocrite La Roquette ends the play with the following words: "They may drive us away like wolves; we come back like foxes. Revenge yourselves! Revenge yourselves! We shall do the same. (*In a very humble voice*) I shall enter the order of Jesuits."

Goldoni, the Italian dramatist, wrote also a play called *Molière*, of which he gives an outline in his *autobiography*, where he says—"I was acquainted with Molière, and respected this master of the art as highly as the Piedmontese, and I was seized instantly with a desire to give them a convincing proof of it. I immediately composed a comedy in five acts, and in verse, without masks or change of scene, of which the title and principal subject were Molière himself. The argument was taken from two anecdotes of his private life; the one, his projected marriage with Isabelle, the daughter of Béjart; and the other, the prohibition of his *Tartuffe*. These two historical facts accord so well together, that the unity of action is perfectly observed. The impostors of Paris, alarmed at the comedy of Molière, knew that the author had sent to the camp, where Louis XIV., then was, to obtain permission for its representation, and they were afraid lest the revocation of the prohibition should be obtained.

"I employed in my piece a person of the name of Pirlon, a hypocrite in every sense of the word, who introduces himself into the author's house, discovers to La Béjart Molière's love for her daughter, of which she was yet ignorant, engages her to quit her companion and director; behaves in the same manner to Isabelle, holding up to her the situation of an actress as the road to perdition, and endeavours to seduce La Foret, their waiting-woman, who, more adroit than her mistresses, dupes the duper, inspires him with a love for her, and takes his cloak and hat from him to give to Molière, who appears on the stage with the dress of the impostor. I was bold enough to exhibit it in my piece, a much more marked hypocrite than that of Molière; but hypocrites had then lost a great deal of their ancient credit in Italy.

"During the interval between the fourth and last act of my comedy, the *Tartuffe* of Molière is acted in the theatre of the Hotel de Bourgogne; all the characters of my piece make their appearance in the fifth act, for the purpose of complimenting Molière; Pirlon, concealed in a closet, where he was expecting La Foret, is forced to come forth in the presence of the spectators, and is assailed with the sarcasms which he so richly deserved; and Molière, to add to his joy and happiness, marries Isabelle, in spite of the mother, who aspired to the conquest of her future son-in-law.

"In this piece are to be found several details of the life of Molière. The character of Valerio is Baron, an actor of Molière's company. Leander is a copy of La Chapelle, a friend of the author, and often mentioned in the account of his life. . . . This work is in verse. . . . As the subject was a French author, who wrote largely in that style, it became necessary to imitate him."

I have read Goldoni's play, and do not think that he has either succeeded in giving a good idea of the character of Molière, or of a hypocrite. Molière, in the Italian play, in a conversation with Valerio (Act iv. scene 8) says, "Philosophy teaches us, and experience proves it to us, that no other love exists here below but self-love." This is certainly not in conformity with Molière's life. Pirlon, the hypocrite, when discovered repents, and begs pardon on his knees; and this also Tartuffe would not have done. Mercier has remodelled and altered the *Molière* of Goldoni for the French stage; where it was represented, but it did not meet with much success.

In the fifth volume of the "Select Comedies of M. de Molière, London, 1732," is found a translation of *Tartuffe*, under the name of *The Impostor*, written by Mr. Martin Clare, a schoolmaster. He dedicates it to Mr. Wyndham, of Clower-Wall, in Gloucestershire, who appears to have had "a very promising eldest son," a pupil of the pedagogue, and who was going to play a part in the translation of Molière's comedy. Unforeseen circumstances prevented this piece being brought out; but Mr. Clare—I suppose with an eye to future favours—says that the young gentleman would, he knows, have done "great justice to any one of the parts." Mr. Clare might, like Hamlet, exclaim, "O my prophetic soul." The dedication is as follows:

SIR,

I take leave to offer You the Fruit of a few leisure Hours, spent in translating one of the most celebrated pieces of the famous *Molière*. It was first intended to be exhibited as a publick Exercise by my YOUNG GENTLEMAN (in which Your very promising eldest son, whose Tuitlon You have been pleased to intrust me with, would, I know do great Justice to any one of the Parts) but on Account of the useful Publication of this excellent Comic Writer, I am inclin'd to send it into the world under Your Patronage and Protection.

The Original has occasionally given Offence to the Body of Zealots and Hypocrites in *France*, and wherever else their Numbers were considerable; but from its intrinsick Merit, the Truth of the Drawing, and Justness of the colouring, this particular Piece has never wanted for Patrons, among Persons of the greatest Sense, Virtue, Learning, and Taste, to support it against the violent Opposition it has met with.

What Success the Translation may have I cannot foresee. But as it is thrown under the Guardianship of a Gentleman, who, both in publick and private Life, has always been a profess'd Enemy to Artifice, Disguise, and Fraud, I am encourag'd to hope, that a moderate Version of a Piece, wherein those Vices are finely expos'd will not be, for Your sake, ill received by the Publick. I am with great Regard, SIR, Your most Obliged, and Obedient, Humble Servant,

MARTIN CLARE.

Academy in Soho Square, London, July 25, 1732.

There is also a Prologue to Mr. Clare's *Impostor*, spoken by a young gentleman of the Academy in Soho Square, when acted there in the year 1726 ; and an Epilogue spoken by another young gentleman in the character of "Madam Parnelle," which I doubt very much if any school-master would let one of his pupils recite at the present time.

Matthew Melbourne, an actor of considerable eminence, belonging to the Duke of York's theatre, in the reign of King Charles II., wrote a translation, in blank verse, of the *Tartuffe*, which he dedicated to the Right Honourable Henry, Lord Howard of Norfolk. The translator, a Roman Catholic, seems to have been accused, by the well known Dr. Titus Oates, of complicity in the supposed Catholic plot, for he was imprisoned, and died in Newgate in 1679. His translation, called *Tartuffe, or the French Puritan*—Puritan stands for Huguenot—was acted at the Theatre-Royal, 1670, and, according to the author's account, seems to have met with great success. There are several new scenes added in the English play which are not found in the original comedy, and which certainly do not improve it. They are the following:—At the end of the first act of *The French Puritan*, Laurence, Tartuffe's man-servant, and Dorina, the waiting-maid, meet ; he behaves rather rudely to her ; but she discovers that he is not a servant, but a confederate of his supposed master, because he addresses the latter only by his name. Tartuffe who, in the original play, does not appear until the second scene of the third act, in this translation, "passes (now) over the stage in a demure posture." In the fifth scene of the second act of the English play, Laurence confesses to Dorina that he is not so holy as he seems ; and in order to prove it sings a very indecent song. In the eighth scene of the third act, Tartuffe unfolds his plans broadly to Laurence ; whilst, in the ninth scene of the same act, Madame Pernelle expresses her delight to "Flypote" that her grandson is disinherited in favour of Tartuffe. In the second scene of the fourth act, Laurence advises Dorina to procure a meeting between Elmiro and Tartuffe, and to let Orgon be a secret witness of it. In the original French play, Elmiro plans the meeting herself. The fifth act of *The French Puritan* differs also from Molière's comedy ; Laurence betrays his master, and produces the cabinet and writings which Tartuffe had appropriated ; and then all the characters of the play end with a dance !

Crowne wrote a play, *The English Friar*, acted in 1690, of which the hypocrite, Father Finical, is certainly suggested by Tartuffe. Nobody can read the last scene of the fifth act of the English play without becoming convinced of this. Some of the very words of Tartuffe, Crowne puts into Finical's mouth.

The Nonjuror, a very successful comedy, by Colley Cibber, acted at Drury Lane, Dec. 6th, 1717, is another imitation of *Tartuffe*. In the dedication to the King, Cibber, with an eye to business, says that "the Sullen and Disaffected, . . . for want of proper Amusement, often enter into Wild and Seditious Schemes to reform." Of course, the most proper amusement is the Theatre, and to prove this further, he says : "It has even discovered the Strength and Number to be much less than may have been artfully insinuated, . . . of which your Majesty may have lately seen an Instance, in the Insuppressible acclamations that were given on your appearing to Honour this Play with your Royal Presence." For this dedication, Cibber received two hundred pounds from George I. Dr. Wolff is a close copy from the French original, although the English dramatist says (in his *Apology*) that it was his intention to portray "an English popish priest lurking under the doctrine of our own church, to

raise his fortune upon the ruin of a worthy gentleman, whom his dissembled sanctity had seduced into the treasonable cause of a Roman Catholic outlaw." The parts of Dorina the waiting-maid, Cléante, and Madame Pernelle are omitted; but that of Marianne (Maria) is improved, and has been made one of the best coquettes on the stage. Cibber has been accused of having stolen the plot, characters, incidents, and most part of the language from Medbourne; but this is untrue. What he has taken from him is the servant Charles (Laurence), who also betrays his master. The prologue of *The Nonjuror*, written by Rowe, is chiefly addressed to the Jacobites, and ends thus:—

"Ship off, ye Slaves, and seek some passive Land,
Where Tyrants after your own Hearts command,
To your Transalpine Master's Rule resort,
And fill an empty abdicated Court.
Turn your Possessions here to ready Rhino,
And buy ye Lands and Lordships at Urbino."

Macaulay in his *History of England*, 8vo, 1855, Vol. III., ch. xiv., "General character of the Nonjuring Clergy," states, "the public voice loudly accused many nonjurors of requiting the hospitality of their benefactors with villany as black as that of the hypocrite depicted in the masterpiece of Molière. Indeed, when Cibber undertook to adapt that noble comedy to the English stage, he made his Tartuffe a nonjuror; and Johnson, who cannot be supposed to have been prejudiced against the nonjurors, frankly owned that Cibber had done them no wrong."

According to Maidment and Logan's Introductory Notice to *The English Friar*, Cibber owed a great deal of his success to Crowne's play: "For instance, Father Finical becomes a bishop, so does Dr. Wolff; both priests are of an amorous complexion; Finical courts the maid, Wolff the mistress, both are detected, and pretty much in the same manner. 'The *Biographia Dramatica* says, 'The Coquet Maria is truly original, and most elegantly spirited;' is not this precisely the character of Laura, the eldest daughter of Lord Stately, who is described amongst the *Dramatis Personæ* 'a great Gallant and Coquet?' Not to multiply points of resemblance, it is plain that Cibber had some remembrance of *The English Friar* when he was preparing the *Nonjuror* for the stage."

It is said that Pope wrote "a Complete Key to *The Nonjuror*," under the name of Joseph Guy, in which a comparison is drawn—and not in the choicest language—between Molière's *Tartuffe* and Cibber's *Nonjuror*, greatly—and justly so—to the disadvantage of the latter. Among other compliments, it is said: "Mr. Cibber did not want an old woman to strengthen the bigotry of her weak son (Cibber had not plagiarized Madame Pernelle), and therefore has made that son a very old woman."

On June 20th, 1718, Medbourne's translation of *Tartuffe*, which had not been acted for thirty years, was performed at Lincoln's Inn-Fields, with a prologue, said to be written by Pope in imitation of Rowe, and ending almost in his very words, thus:

"Ship off, ye Saints, and seek some righteous Land,
Where Pastors after your own Hearts command;
Like Criminals adjudg'd to leave the nation,
Go, take the Benefit of Transportation.
Turn your possessions here to ready Rhino,
And Preach abroad by *fure non Divino*."

Isaac Bickerstaffe altered Colley Cibber's play, and called it *The Hypocrite*, which was acted at Drury Lane on the 17th of November 1768. This is *The Nonjuror*, with the names altered, the bitter attacks against Jacobites and Nonjurors, and a good deal of the spirit left out, Madame Pernelle (old Lady Lambert), from Tartuffe, added, and a new character,—which I venture to think very vulgar—Mawworm, inserted. The hypocrite is called Dr. Cantwell, the credulous Orgon, Sir John Lambert, and the coquette, Charlotte.

Sheridan, in *The School for Scandal*, has partly imitated Tartuffe in Joseph Surface, and the third scene of the fourth act of his play seems to me based upon the fifth scene of the fourth act of *Tartuffe*; it is only based upon, not borrowed from, Molière.

Mr. John Oxenford, the eminent theatrical critic, has also written a translation of *Tartuffe*, in blank verse, which was performed, with great success, some years ago, at the Adelphi Theatre, London; this play has never been printed.

Z

VOL. II.

PREFACE.¹⁶

THIS is a comedy about which there has been a great deal of noise, which has been for a long time persecuted; and the people whom it holds up have well shown that they are the most powerful in France of all those whom I have hitherto portrayed. The marquises, the blue stockings, the cuckolds and the doctors, have quietly suffered themselves to be represented, and have pretended to be amused, in common with all the world, at the sketches which I have made of them; but the hypocrites have not taken the joke. At first they were somewhat amazed, and found it strange that I should have had the presumption to make free with their grimaces, and wish to decry a trade much indulged in by honest people. It is a crime which they could not pardon me, and they have all risen up in arms against my comedy with a terrible fury. They took particular care not to attack it from a point of view where it wounded them—they have too much policy for that, and are too knowing to lay bare the bottoms of their hearts. In accordance with their laudable customs, they have concealed their interests beneath the cloak of God's cause; and to listen to them, *The Tartuffe* is a piece that offends piety. It is, from beginning to end, full of abominations, and nothing is found in it but what deserves the fire. Every syllable in it is impious; the gesticulations themselves are criminal; and the least glance of the eye, the slightest shake of the head, conceal mysteries which they find means to explain to my disadvantage.

Of little avail was it to submit it to the criticism of my friends, and to the censorship of the public; the corrections which I have made, the judgment of the King and the Queen, who have seen it; the approbation of the great princes and

¹⁶ This preface was written for the first edition of the *Tartuffe*, in 1669, and is therefore posterior to the petitions given in the Introductory Notice to this play.

the great ministers, who honoured the performance with their presence; the testimony of people of worth, who found it instructing—all this was of no use. They will not abate one jot; and they still continue, every day, to set their indiscreet zealots on me in public, who piously load me with insults, and charitably consign me to perdition.

I would care very little for what they could say, were it not for their artfulness in bringing people whom I respect to be at enmity with me, and in enlisting among their ranks the truly good, whose good faith they take advantage of, and who, by the warmth of their interest in the cause of Heaven, are apt to receive the impressions which they wish to give them. It is this which compels me to defend myself. It is with the truly pious that I everywhere wish to justify myself as to the arrangement of my comedy; and I implore them, with all my heart, not to condemn things before they have seen them, to divest themselves of all bias, and not to be the tool of the passions of those whose grimaces are a disgrace to them.

If they will take the trouble to examine my comedy in good faith, they will perceive, doubtless, the honesty of my intentions everywhere, and that it is not intended to hold sacred things up to ridicule; that I have treated it with every precaution which the delicacy of the subject required; and that I have employed every possible art and care plainly to show the difference between the character of the hypocrite and that of the truly devout. For this purpose I have devoted two entire acts to prepare my audience for the advent of my scoundrel. He does not make the spectator waver for an instant; he is known immediately by the marks which I have given him; and, from first to last, he does not utter a word, nor make a movement, but what depicts to the beholder the character of a wicked man, in violent contrast to the really good one whom I have placed in opposition to him.

I am well aware that, in reply, those gentlemen have endeavoured to insinuate that the stage is not fit for the discussion of these subjects; but, by their leave, I ask them upon what they base this beautiful maxim. It is a theory which they only advance, and which they do not prove by any means; and it would doubtless, not be difficult to show them that, with the ancients comedy derived its origin from religion, and was a part of their mysteries; that the Spaniards, our neighbours, never celebrate a feast in which comedy is not mixed up; and that, even amongst us it owes its birth to the cares of a brotherhood to which the *hôtel de Bourgogne* still belongs; that it was a place given to them to represent in it the most important mysteries of our faith; that comedies printed in Gothic characters, under the name of a doctor of

the Sorbonne, may still be seen there; and, without carrying the matter so far, that, in our days, sacred pieces of M. de Corneille¹⁷ have been performed, which were the admiration of the whole of France. If it be the aim of comedy to correct man's vices, then I do not see for what reason there should be a privileged class. Such a one is, in the State, decidedly more dangerous in its consequences than any other; and we have seen that the stage possesses a great virtue as a corrective medium. The most beautiful passages in a serious moral are most frequently less powerful than those of a satire; and nothing admonishes the majority of people better than the portrayal of their faults. To expose vices to the ridicule of all the world is a severe blow to them. Reprehensions are easily suffered, but not so ridicule. People do not mind being wicked; but they object to being made ridiculous.

The reproach against me is that I have put pious terms in the mouth of my impostor. How could I avoid it, wishing to represent the character of a hypocrite accurately? It is sufficient, I think, that I show the criminal motives which make him say these things, and that I have eliminated from them the sacred terms, the bad use of which might have caused pain.¹⁸ "But in the fourth act he gives vent to a pernicious moral." But has not this moral been dinned into everybody's ears?¹⁹ Does it say aught that is new in my comedy? And is there any fear that things so universally detested shall leave any impression on men's minds? that I can make them dangerous by introducing them on the stage; that they are likely to receive any authority from the lips of a scoundrel? There is not the least indication of that; and one ought to approve the comedy of *Tartuffe*, or condemn all comedies wholesale.

It is that which people have attacked furiously of late; and never has the stage been so furiously tilted at. I cannot deny that there have been Fathers of the Church who have condemned comedy; but neither can it be denied to me that there have been some who have treated it more leniently. Thus the authority upon which people seek to found their censorship is destroyed by this division; and all that can be deduced from this diversity of opinions in equally enlightened minds, is that they have regarded comedy from a different point of view, and that while some have looked at it in its purifying influence, others have considered it in its corrupting

¹⁷ *Polyeucte*; and *Théodore, virgin and martyr*.

¹⁸ Molière alludes here to a line of *Tartuffe*, in the eighth scene of the third act, which was in the first representation, "Forgive him, O Heaven! as I forgive him."

¹⁹ Molière speaks of the false casuistical morals attacked by Pascal in the seventh *Provinciale*.

tendency, and confounded it with those vile spectacles, rightly named exhibitions of turpitude.

And in fact, since we have to argue upon things, and not upon words; and that the majority of contradictions cannot well be reconciled, and that the same word often envelops two opposite meanings, we have but to lift the veil of the equivocal, and to look what comedy is in itself, to see whether it is to be condemned. It is, doubtless, well known that, being nothing else but an ingenious poem, which, by its agreeable teaching, seeks to point out the faults of mankind, it does not deserve to be so unjustly censured; and if we may listen on that point to the testimony of antiquity, it will tell us that her most famous philosophers have eulogized comedy; they who professed such austere wisdom, and who were incessantly decrying the vices of their age. It will show us that Aristotle devoted many of his vigils to the theatre, and took the trouble to reduce to precept the art of constructing comedies. It will teach us that her greatest men, foremost in dignity, have gloried in composing some themselves; that there were others who did not disdain to recite in public those which they had composed; that Greece proclaimed her appreciation of that art by the glorious prizes she awarded to, and the magnificent theatres she built in honour of it; and lastly, that in Rome this same art was crowned with extraordinary honours. I do not say in debauched Rome, under the licentious emperors, but in disciplined Rome, under the wisdom of her consuls, and at the most vigorous period of Roman virtue.

I admit that there have been times in which comedy became corrupt. And what is there in this world that does not become corrupt every day? There is nothing so pure but what mankind can bring crime to bear upon it; no art so salutary but what they can reverse its intentions; nothing so good in itself but what they can turn to a bad use. Medicine is a profitable art, and every one esteems it as one of the most excellent things in existence; and yet there have been periods in which it has made itself odious, and has often been used to poison people. Philosophy is a gift of Heaven; it was given to us to lead our minds to the knowledge of God by the contemplation of nature's wonders; still we are not unaware that it has often been diverted from its use, and employed openly to support impiety. Even the most sacred things are not safe from men's corruption; and we see the greatest scoundrels daily abusing piety, and wickedly making it the tool for the most abominable crimes. But for all that, we do not fail to make those distinctions which it is right we should make. We do not envelop in the same warp of a false deduction the good of the thing corrupted with the malice of the cor-

rupter. We always separate the bad use from the honest intention of art, and no more than we would dream of defending the banishment of medicine from Rome, or the public condemnation of philosophy at Athens, ought we to put a veto upon comedy for having been censured at certain times. This censuring had its reasons which have no existence here. It confined itself strictly to what it saw; and we ought, therefore, not to drag it beyond the limits which it has adopted, extend it farther than necessary, or make it class the guilty with the innocent. The comedy which it designed to attack is not at all the comedy which we wish to defend. We must take good care not to confound the one with the other. They are two persons whose morals are totally opposed. They bear no relation to each other except the resemblance of the name; and it would be a crying injustice to wish to condemn Olympia, who is an honest woman, because there was another Olympia, who was a loose character.²⁰ Such verdicts would, doubtless, produce a great disorder in the world. Everything would be open to condemnation; and, since this rigour is not carried out with reference to all other things which are daily abused, we ought to extend the same grace to comedy, and approve those plays in which instruction and honesty are made manifest.

I am well aware that there are certain minds whose delicacy can tolerate no comedy whatsoever; who say that the most honest ones are the most dangerous; that the passions which they depict are so much the more touching because they are full of virtue; and that people are too much affected by this kind of representations. I do not see any great crime in becoming affected at the sight of an honourable passion: or that the complete state of insensibility to which they would elevate our feelings would indicate a high standard of virtue. I am inclined to doubt whether such great perfection be in the power of human nature, and whether it would not be better to endeavour to rectify and mollify men's passions, than to eliminate them altogether. I admit that there are places which it would be more salutary to frequent than theatres; and if we take it for granted that all things that do not directly concern God and our salvation are reprehensible, then it becomes certain that comedy should be one of them, and I for one could not object that it should be condemned among the rest. But let us suppose, as it is true, that there must be intervals to

²⁰ It has been said that Molière, in mentioning the name of Olympia, wished to hit at Olympia Maldachini, a sister-in-law of Pope Innocent X. This Pope died in 1655, and was the author of the bull against the five propositions of Jansenius. The life of the lady, who was far from a saint, had only lately been translated from the Italian into French.

pious devotions, and that we have need of amusement during that time, then I maintain that nothing more innocent than comedy could be found. I have digressed too far. Let me wind up with the remark of a great prince²¹ on the comedy of *Tartuffe*. A week after it had been forbidden, there was performed before the court a piece entitled *Scaramouch, a hermit*,²² and the King, coming out of the theatre, said to the prince of whom I have just spoken, "I should like to know why the people, who are so very much shocked at the comedy of Molière, do not say a word about *Scaramouch*," to which the prince answered, "The reason of that is, that the comedy of *Scaramouch* makes game of Heaven and religion, about which these gentlemen care very little ; but Molière's makes game of them ; it is that which they cannot tolerate."

²¹ The Prince de Condé.

²² The farce of *Scaramouch, a hermit* contained many indecent situations ; amongst others, that of a monk entering by the balcony into the house of a married woman, and reappearing from time to time before the public, saying, "*Questo e per morti ficar la carne.*"

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ORGON, *husband to Elmire.*²³

DAMIS, *his son.*

VALÈRE, *Mariane's lover.*

CLÉANTE, *Orgon's brother-in-law.*

TARTUFFE.

M. LOYAL, *a tipstaff.*²⁴

A POLICE OFFICER.²⁵

ELMIRE, *Orgon's wife.*

MADAME PERNELLE, *Orgon's mother.*

MARIANNE, *Orgon's daughter.*

DORINE, *her maid.*

FLIPOTE, *Madame Pernelle's servant.*

The scene is in PARIS, in ORGON'S HOUSE.

²³ This part was played by Molière himself. In the inventory taken after Molière's death, we find "the dress for Orgon consisting of a doublet, breeches, and cloak of black *vénitienne*, the cloak lined with tabby, and adorned with English lace, the garters, rosettes of the shoes, and the shoes adorned in the same manner." Madame Molière played the part of Elmire.

²⁴ The original has *sergent*. The tipstiffs of the upper court were called *huissiers*; in Paris, *huissiers à verge*; and of a lower court, *sergents*.

²⁵ The original has *exempt*, from the verb *exempter*, to be free from, because formerly non-commissioned officers of the cavalry, who commanded in the absence of their superiors, were free from all other duties, and were *exempt*; such officers commanded the *maréchaussée* or prevotal guard when it arrested anyone.

TARTUFFE; OR, THE HYPOCRITE.

(*TARTUFFE; OU, L'IMPOSTEUR*).

ACT I.

SCENE I.—MADAME PERNELLE, ELMIRE, MARIANE,
CLÉANTE, DAMIS, DORINE, FLIPOTE.

M. PER. Come along, Flipote, come along; let us get rid of them.

ELM. You walk so fast, that one can hardly keep up with you.

M. PER. Do not trouble yourself, daughter-in-law, do not trouble yourself, do not come any farther; there is no need for all this ceremony.

ELM. We only give you your due. But pray, mother, why are you in such haste to leave us?

M. PER. Because I cannot bear to see such goings on. No one cares to please me. I leave your house very little edified: all my advice is despised; nothing is respected, every one has his say aloud, and it is just like the court of King Pétaud.²⁶

²⁶ *Pétaud*, from the Latin *peto*, I ask, was formerly the name of the chief of the beggars in France. As his subordinates were very unruly, a house where everybody gave orders was called figuratively "the court of King Pétaud." In Mr. Clare's translation, mentioned in the Introductory Notice, this court is called "Dover's Court."

DOR. If . . .

M. PER. You are, my dear, a little too much of a talker, and a great deal too saucy for a waiting maid. You give your advice about everything.

DAM. But . . .

M. PER. Four letters spell your name, my child, a "fool:" I, your grandmother, tell you so; and I have already predicted to my son, your father, a hundred times, that you are fast becoming a good-for-nothing, who will give him nought but trouble.

MAR. I think . . .

M. PER. Good-lack! grand-daughter, you play the prude, and to look at you, butter would not melt in your mouth. But still waters run deep, as the saying is; and I do not like your sly doings at all.

ELM. But, mother . . .

M. PER. By your leave, daughter-in-law, your whole conduct is altogether wrong; you ought to set them a good example; and their late mother managed them a great deal better. You are extravagant; and it disgusts me to see you decked out like a princess.²⁷ The woman who wishes to please her husband only, daughter-in-law, has no need of so much finery.

CLE. But after all, Madam . . .

M. PER. As for you, Sir, who are her brother, I esteem, love, and respect you very much; but, nevertheless, if I were my son and her husband, I would beg of you earnestly not to enter our house. You are always laying down maxims which respectable people ought not to follow. I speak to you rather frankly; but it is a way I have got, and I do not mince my words when I have something on my mind.

DAM. Your Mr. Tartuffe is an angel, no doubt . . .

M. PER. He is a very worthy man, who ought to be lis-

²⁷ According to Grimarest's *Vie de Molière*, our author went into the dressing-room of his wife—who was going to play the part of Elmire—a quarter of an hour before the piece began. He found her clothed in a magnificent dress, which she had put on, without telling her husband of it. Molière insisted that she should put it off, and take one more in accordance with Elmire's character. I am afraid that this anecdote rests only on mere tradition; still it proves that Mrs. Orgon was too well dressed to suit even the taste of her mother-in-law.

tened to ; and I cannot, without getting angry, suffer him to be sneered at by a fool like you.

DAM. What ! am I to allow a censorious bigot to usurp an absolute authority in this house ! and shall we not be permitted to amuse ourselves, unless that precious gentleman condescends to give us leave !

DOR. If any one were to listen to him and believe in his maxims, one could not do anything without committing a sin ; for he controls everything, this carping critic.

M. PER. And whatever he does control, is well controlled. He wishes to lead you on the road to Heaven : and my son ought to make you all love him.

DAM. No, look here, grandmother, neither father nor anyone else shall ever induce me to look kindly upon him. I should belie my heart to say otherwise. His manners every moment enrage me ; I can foresee the consequence, and one time or other I shall have to come to an open quarrel with this low-bred fellow.²⁸

DOR. Certainly, it is a downright scandal to see a stranger exercise such authority in this house ; to see a beggar, who, when he came, had not a shoe to his foot, and whose whole dress may have been worth twopence, so far forget himself as to cavil at everything, and to assume the authority of a master.

M. PER. Eh ! mercy on me ! things would go on much better if everything were managed according to his pious directions.

DOR. He passes for a saint in your opinion ; but believe me, he is nothing but a hypocrite.

M. PER. What a tongue !

DOR. I should not like to trust myself with him, nor with his man Laurent, without a good guarantee.

M. PER. I do not know what the servant may be at heart ; but as for the master, I will vouch for him as a good man. You bear him ill-will, and only reject him because he tells all of you the truth. It is against sin that his heart waxes wroth, and his only motive is the interest of Heaven.

²⁸ The original has *pied-plat*, flat foot,—I suppose on account of an imaginary connection between a high instep and aristocratic descent.

DOR. Ay; but why, particularly for some time past, can he not bear any one to come to the house? What is there offensive to Heaven in a civil visit, that there must be a noise about it fit to split one's ears? Between ourselves, do you wish me to explain? . . . (*Pointing to Elmire*). Upon my word, I believe him to be jealous of my mistress.

M. PER. Hold your tongue, and mind what you say. It is not he only who blames these visits. All the bustle of these people who frequent this house, these carriages everlastingly standing at the door, and the noisy crowd of so many servants, cause a great disturbance in the whole neighbourhood. I am willing to believe that there is really no harm done; but people will talk of it, and that is not right.

CLE. Alas, Madam, will you prevent people talking? It would be a very hard thing if, in life, for the sake of the foolish things which may be said about us, we had to renounce our best friends. And even if we could resolve to do so, do you think we could compel every one to hold his tongue? There is no protection against slander. Let us, therefore, pay no regard to all this silly tittle-tattle; let us endeavour to live honestly, and leave the gossips to say what they please.

DOR. May not Daphné, our neighbour, and her little husband, be those who speak ill of us? They whose own conduct is the most ridiculous are always the first to slander others. They never fail to catch eagerly at the slightest rumour of a love-affair, to spread the news of it with joy, and to give it the turn which they want. They think to justify their own actions before the world by those of others, painted in colours of their choosing, either in the false expectation of glossing over their own intrigues with some semblance of innocence, or else by making to fall elsewhere some part of that public blame with which they are too heavily burdened.²⁹

M. PER. All these arguments are nothing to the pur-

²⁹ This is said to be an allusion to Olympia Mancini, Countess de Soissons, who spread a report, and even informed the queen, of the rising love of Louis XIV. for Mademoiselle de la Vallière. See Introductory Notice to *The Princess of Elis*.

pose. Orante is known to lead an exemplary life. All her cares tend to Heaven; and I have learned by people that she strongly condemns the company who visit here.

DOR. An admirable pattern indeed, and she is very good, this lady! It is true that she lives very austere; but age has put this ardent zeal into her breast; people know that she is a prude, against her own will. She enjoyed her advantages well enough as long as she was capable of attracting attentions; but, seeing the lustre of her eyes become somewhat dim, she renounces the world which is renouncing her, and conceals under the pompous cloak of lofty wisdom, the decay of her worn-out charms. These are the vicissitudes of coquettes in our time. They find it hard to see their admirers desert them. Thus forsaken, their gloomy anxiety sees no other resource but that of prudery; and the severity of these good women censures everything and pardons nothing.³⁰ Loudly they blame everyone's life, not through charity, but through envy, which cannot bear another to enjoy those pleasures for which their age gives them no longer a relish.³¹

M. PER. (*To Elmire*). These are cock-and-bull stories, made to please you, daughter-in-law. One is obliged to keep silence here, for Madam keeps the ball rolling all day. But I also will have my say in my turn. I tell you that my son has never done anything more sensible than in receiving this devout personage in his house; that Heaven itself, in time of need, has sent him here to reclaim all your erring minds; that for your salvation's sake, you ought to listen to him; and that he censures nothing but what is reprehensible. These visits, these balls, these conversations, are all inventions of the evil one. One

³⁰ This is said to be a hit at the Duchess de Navailles (see Introductory Notice to *The Princess of Elis*), who caused iron railings to be placed at the entrance of the rooms of the maids of honour, in order to prevent Louis XIV. from visiting Mademoiselle de Lamothé Houdancourt. The duchess owed her fortune to Cardinal Mazarin, whose intrigues she had aided during the troubles of the Fronde, when she was Mademoiselle de Neuillant.

³¹ The *Lettre sur l'Imposteur* (see Introductory Notice to this play) mentions a couplet of Madame Pernelle, and a biting answer of Cléante, which were spoken at the first representation of *Tartuffe*, then called *l'Imposteur*, and which, no doubt, Molière afterwards suppressed.

never hears a pious word uttered at any of them; nothing but tittle-tattle, nonsense, and silly prattle. Very often our neighbour comes in for his share of it, and there is back-biting going on right and left. In short, sensible people have their heads turned by the confusion of such meetings. A thousand idle stories are told in no time; and, as a certain doctor said very aptly the other day, it is a perfect tower of Babylon,³² for every one chatters to his heart's content; and to show you what brought this up. . . . (*Pointing to Cléante*). But here is this gentleman giggling already! Go and look for some fools to laugh at, and without. . . . (*To Elmire*). Good bye, daughter-in-law; I will say no more. I make you a present of the rest, but it will be a fine day when I set my foot in your house again. (*Slapping Flipote's face*). Come along you, you stand dreaming and gaping here. Ods bobs! I shall warm your ears for you. March on, slut, march on.

SCENE II.—CLÉANTE, DORINE.

CLE. I shall not go with her, for fear she should fall foul of me again; that this good lady . . .

DOR. Ah! it is a pity that she does not hear you say so: she would tell you that you are good, but that she is not yet old enough to be called so.

CLE. How she fired up against us for nothing! And how infatuated she seems with her Tartuffe!

DOR. Oh! indeed, all this is nothing compared with the son: and if you saw him, you would say it is much worse. During our troubles³³ he acted like a man of sense, and displayed some courage in the service of his prince;³⁴ but since he has grown so fond of this Tartuffe, he is become a perfect dolt. He calls him brother, and loves him in

³² Madame Pernelle says "the Tower of Babylon," instead of "the Tower of Babel." A certain Jesuit, Caussin (1583-1651), wrote in one of his books, *The Holy Court*, that "men built the tower of Babel, and women the tower of Babbie (*Babil*)."

³³ This refers to the troubles of the Fronde, during the minority of Louis XIV.

³⁴ The *Lettre sur l'Imposteur* shows that this play was originally somewhat different here.

his very soul a hundred times better than either mother, son, daughter, or wife. He is the sole confidant of all his secrets, and the prudent director of all his actions; he caresses him, embraces him; and one could show no more affection, I think, to a mistress. He will have him seated at the upper end of the table, and is delighted to see him eat as much as half a dozen; the choicest morsels of everything must be given to him; and, if he happens to belch, he says to him "God preserve you."³⁵ In short, he is crazy about him; he is his all, his hero; he admires everything he does, he quotes him on all occasions; he looks upon his most trifling actions as miracles, and every word he utters is considered an oracle. The other, who knows his dupe, and wishes to make the most of him, has the art of dazzling him by a hundred deceitful appearances. His pretended devotion draws money from him at every hour of the day; and assumes the right of commenting upon the conduct of every one of us. Even the jackanapes, his servant, pretends also to read us a lesson; he comes preaching to us with fierce looks, and throws away our ribbons, our paint, and our patches. Only the other day, the wretch tore a handkerchief which he had found between the leaves of "*The Flower of the Saints*,"³⁶ saying that it was a dreadful sin to bring these holy things into contact with the devil's deckings.

SCENE III.—ELMIRE, MARIANE, DAMIS, CLÉANTE,
DORINE.

ELM. (*To Cléante*). You are very fortunate not to have assisted at the speech to which she treated us at the door. But I have just seen my husband; and as he did not see me, I shall go up stairs to await his coming.

³⁵ All the original editions have the following note, which may probably be attributed to Molière: "It is a servant who speaks."

³⁶ This book was called *Flos Sanctorum, o libro de las vidas de los Santos*, and was written by Pedro Ribadeneira, a celebrated Spanish Jesuit (1527-1611). It was translated into French as *Fleurs des vies des Saints*, and published in Paris in 1641, and at Lyons in 1666, in two folio volumes; and later in English, as *Lives of the Saints*, and in the same number of volumes. There was also another book, originally in French, with the same title, written by a Jesuit, Bonnefons, published first in 1663, and which had already reached its third edition in 1664.

CLE. I will wait for him here, with small pleasure ; and merely say how do ye do to him.

SCENE IV.—CLÉANTE, DAMIS, DORINE.

DAM. Just sound him about this marriage of my sister. I suspect that Tartuffe is opposed to it, because he makes my father use so many evasions ; and you are not ignorant how greatly I am interested in it . . . If the same passion fires my sister's and Valère's heart, the sister of this friend is, as you know, dear to me ; and if it were necessary . . .

DOR. Here he is.

SCENE V.—ORGON, CLÉANTE, DORINE.

ORG. Ha ! good morrow, brother.

CLE. I was just going, and am glad to see you returned. The country is not very cheering at present.

ORG. Dorine . . . (*To Cléante*). Pray, one moment, brother-in-law. Allow me to inquire the news here to ease my mind. (*To Dorine*). Has everything gone on well these two days ? What are they doing, and how are they all ?

DOR. The day before yesterday my mistress had an attack of fever until evening, accompanied by an extraordinary headache.

ORG. And Tartuffe ?

DOR. Tartuffe ! He is wonderfully well, stout and fat, with a fresh complexion, and a ruddy mouth.

ORG. Poor fellow !

DOR. In the evening she felt very sick, and could not touch a morsel of supper, so violent was still the pain in her head.

ORG. And Tartuffe ?

DOR. He supped by himself in her presence ; and very devoutly ate two partridges, and half a leg of mutton hashed.

ORG. Poor fellow !

DOR. The whole night she did not close her eyes for a moment. She was so feverish that she could not sleep, and we were obliged to sit up with her until morning.

ORG. And Tartuffe ?

DOR. Pleasantly overcome with sleep, he went to his room when he left the table; and jumped into his cozy bed, where he slept undisturbed until morning.

ORG. Poor fellow!

DOR. We at length prevailed upon the mistress to be bled; and she was almost immediately relieved.

ORG. And Tartuffe?

DOR. He picked up his courage again as he ought to; and, to fortify himself against all harm, he drank four large draughts of wine at breakfast, to make up for the blood that the mistress had lost.

ORG. Poor fellow!

DOR. At present, they are both well; and I shall go and inform the mistress how glad you feel at her recovery.

SCENE VI.—ORGON, CLÉANTE.

CLE. She is laughing at you to your face, brother: and, without wishing to make you angry, I must tell you candidly that it is not without reason. Was there ever such a whim heard of? Can it be possible that any man could so charm you now-a-days as to make you forget everything for him? That after having relieved his indigence, in your own house, you should go as far as . . .

ORG. Stop, brother-in-law, you do not know the man of whom you are speaking?

CLE. I do not know him, if you like; but after all, in order to know what sort of man he is . . .

ORG. You would be charmed to know him, brother; and there would be no end to your delight. He is a man . . . who . . . ah . . . a man . . . in short, a man.³⁷ One who acts up to his own precepts, enjoys a profound peace, and looks upon the whole world as so much dirt. Yes; I am quite another man since I conversed with him; he teaches me to set my heart upon nothing; he detaches my mind from all friendship; and I could see brother, children, mother, and wife die, without troubling myself in the least about it.

³⁷ This line has given rise to many different readings; but according to the *Lettre sur l'Imposteur*, and of which a *résumé* is given in the Introductory Notice to this play, Orgon intends to quote all the good qualities of Tartuffe, and can find nothing else to say of him but that he is a man.

CLE. Humane sentiments these, brother !

ORG. Ah ! if you had seen how I first met him, you would have conceived the same friendship for him that I feel. Every day he came to church, and, with a gentle mien, kneeled down opposite me. He attracted the notice of the whole congregation by the fervency with which he sent up his prayers to heaven. He uttered sighs, was enraptured, and humbly kissed the ground every moment : and when I went out, he swiftly ran before me to offer me holy water at the door. Informed by his servants, who imitates him in everything, of his poverty, and who he was, I made him some presents : but, with great modesty, he always wished to return some part of them. " It is too much," he said ; " too much by half ; I do not deserve your pity." And when I refused to take them back again, he would go and give them to the poor before my face. At length Heaven moved me to take him to my house, and since then, everything seems to prosper here. I perceive that he reproves everything, and that he takes a great interest, even in my wife, for my sake. He warns me of the people who look too lovingly at her, and he is six times more jealous of her than I am. But you cannot believe how far his zeal goes : the slightest trifle in himself he calls a sin ; a mere nothing is sufficient to shock him ; so much so that he accused himself, the other day, of having caught a flea whilst he was at his devotions, and of having killed it with too much anger.³⁸

CLE. Zounds ! I believe you are mad, brother. Are

³⁸ Molière takes care to demonstrate, from the very beginning, that Tartuffe is a hypocrite, and the whole speech of Orgon shows him to be so. The killing of the flea is taken from the life of Saint Macarius in Giacomo da Voragine (1230-1298), *Historia Lombardica, seu Legenda Sanctorum*, which was more familiarly known as the *Legenda aurea*, or *Golden Legend*. The first English edition was one of the books which Caxton printed and published in 1483. The story is thus related, by the Rev. Alban Butler, in *The Lives of the Saints* : " Saint Macarius happened one day to kill a gnat that was biting him in his cell ; reflecting that he had lost the opportunity of suffering that mortification, he hastened from the cell for the marshes of Scetè, which abound with great flies, whose stings pierce even wild boars. There he continued six months, exposed to those ravaging insects ; and to such a degree was his whole body disfigured by them with sores and swellings, that when he returned, he was only to be known by his voice."

you making game of me with such a speech? and do you pretend that all this fooling . . .

ORG. Brother, this discourse savours of free-thinking.³⁹ You are somewhat tainted with it; and, as I have often told you, you will get yourself into some unpleasant scrape.

CLE. The usual clap-trap of your set; they wish everyone to be blind like themselves. To keep one's eyes open is to be a free-thinker; and whosoever does not worship pretentious affections has neither respect for, nor faith in holy things. Go along; all your speeches do not frighten me; I know what I am saying, and Heaven sees my heart. We are not the slaves of your formalists. There are hypocrites in religion as well as pretenders to courage; and as we never find the truly brave man make much noise where honour leads him, no more are the good and truly pious, whom we ought to follow, those who make so many grimaces. What! would you make no distinction between hypocrisy and true devotion? Would you treat them both alike, and give the same honour to the mask as to the face; put artifice on a level with sincerity, confound appearance with reality, value the shadow as much as the substance; and false coin the same as real? Men, for the most part, are strange creatures, and never keep the right mean; reason's boundaries are too narrow for them; in every character they overact their parts; and they often spoil the noblest designs, because they exaggerate, and carry them too far. This by the way, brother.

ORG. Yes, you are no doubt a doctor to be looked up to; you possess all the world's wisdom; you are the only sage, and the only enlightened man, an oracle, a Cato of the present age; and all men, compared with you, are fools.

CLE. I am not, brother, a doctor to be looked up to; nor do I possess all the world's wisdom. But, in one word, I know enough to distinguish truth from falsehood. And as I know no character more worthy of esteem than the truly devout, nor anything in the world more noble or

³⁹ The original has *libertinage*, which, as well as *libertin*, libertine, was formerly employed in French, as well as in English, in speaking of those who took great liberty with the belief generally entertained.

beautiful than the holy fervour of sincere piety, so I know nothing more odious than the whited sepulchre of a pretended zealot, than those downright impostors, those devotees, for public show,⁴⁰ whose sacrilegious and deceitful grimaces abuse with impunity, and make a jest, according to their fancy, of what men hold most holy and sacred; those men who, from motives of self-interest, make a trade of piety, and would purchase honour and reputation at the cost of a hypocritical turning up of the eyes and pretended raptures; those men, I say, whom we see possessed with such an uncommon ardour for the next world, in order to make their fortunes in this; who, with great affectation and many prayers, daily recommend and preach solitude in the midst of the court; who know how to reconcile their zeal with their vices; who are passionate, vindictive, without belief, full of artifice, and would, in order to destroy a man, insolently cover their fierce resentment under the cloak of Heaven's interests. They are the more dangerous in their bitter wrath because they use against us weapons which men reverence, and because their passion, for which they are commended, prompts them to assassinate us with a consecrated blade. One sees too many of those vile characters, but the really devout at heart are easily recognized. Our age has shown us some, brother, who may serve us as glorious examples. Look at Ariston, look at Périandre, Oronte, Alcidas, Polydore, Clitandre—no one disputes their title. But they do not boast of their virtue. One does not see this unbearable ostentation in them; and their piety is human, is tractable; they do not censure all our doings, they think that these corrections would show too much pride on their part; and, leaving big words to others, they reprove our actions by their own. They do not think anything evil, because it seems so, and their mind is inclined to judge well of others. They have no cabals, no intrigues; all their anxiety is to live well themselves. They never persecute a sinner; they hate sin only, and do not vindicate the interest of Heaven with greater zeal than Heaven itself. These are my people,

⁴⁰ The original has *dévots de place*. In former times, servants who wished to be hired, went to the market-place to show themselves; these were called *domestiques de place*; hence Molière coined *dévots de place*.

that is the true way to act ; that is, in short, an example to be followed. To say the truth, your man is not of that stamp ; you vaunt his zeal with the best intention ; but I believe that you are dazzled by a false glare.

ORG. My dear brother-in-law, have you had your say ?

CLE. Yes.

ORG. (*Going*). I am your humble servant.

CLE. Pray, one word more, brother. Let us drop this conversation. You know that Valère has your promise to be your son-in-law.

ORG. Yes.

CLE. And that you would appoint a day for the wedding.

ORG. True.

CLE. Why then defer the ceremony ?

ORG. I do not know.

CLE. Have you another design in your mind ?

ORG. Perhaps so.

CLE. Will you break your word ?

ORG. I do not say that.

CLE. There is no obstacle, I think, to prevent you from fulfilling your promise ?

ORG. That is as it may be.

CLE. Why so much ado about a single word ? Valère sent me to you about it.

ORG. Heaven be praised for that !

CLE. But what answer shall I give him ?

ORG. Whatever you please.

CLE. But it is necessary to know your intentions. What are they ?

ORG. To do just what Heaven ordains.

CLE. But to the point. Valère has your promise : will you keep it or not ?

ORG. Farewell.

CLE. (*Alone*). I fear some misfortune for his love, and I ought to inform him of what is going on.⁴¹

⁴¹ Several of Molière's annotators greatly praise this first act, which gives, as it were, a key to the whole comedy. We see at one glance the interior of Orgon's household : the silly talk of an old woman ; the foolish infatuation of the master of the house for Tartuffe ; the pretended religious zeal of that hypocrite ; the quiet reserve of Elmire ; the impetuosity

ACT II.

SCENE I.—ORGON, MARIANE.

JRG. Mariane.

MAR. Father?

ORG. Come here; I have something to say to you privately.

MAR. (*To Orgon, who is looking into a closet*). What are you looking for?

ORG. I am looking whether there is anyone there who might overhear us; for it is a most likely little place for such a purpose.⁴² Now we are all right. Mariane, I have always found you of a sweet disposition, and you have always been very dear to me.

MAR. I am much obliged to you for this fatherly affection.

ORG. That is very well said, daughter; and to deserve it, your only care should be to please me.

MAR. That is my greatest ambition.

ORG. Very well. What say you of our guest Tartuffe?

MAR. Who? I?

ORG. You. Be careful how you answer.

MAR. Alas! I will say whatever you like of him.

SCENE II.—ORGON, MARIANE, DORINE, (*entering softly and keeping behind Orgon, without being seen*).

ORG. That is sensibly spoken . . . Tell me then, my child, that he is a man of the highest worth; that he has

of Damis, the son; the sound philosophy of Cléante; the familiarity and sharpness of the servant Dorine; the gentle timidity of Mariane; everything which afterwards comes out in the play is foreshadowed there, even the passion of Tartuffe for Elmire. This first act also shows how everything in the house is in dire confusion; religious war rages there with all the intensity of the *odium theologicum*; the grandmother has become the foe of her son's children; the father wishes to tyrannize over his daughter and every one else; whilst, on the other side, Damis is always in a rage, Dorine for ever on the verge of impudence and even the calm Cléante appears to have some difficulty in keeping his temper. The spirit with which Molière opens the first act is kept up throughout the whole piece.

⁴² It is from this "most likely little place" that Damis, in the third Scene of the third Act, overhears Tartuffe declaring his love to Elmire. Molière always takes care to throw out such hints, in order to prepare the mind for what is to come.

touched your heart; and that it would be pleasant to you to see him, with my approbation, become your husband. He? (*Mariane draws away with surprise*).

MAR. He!

ORG. What is the matter?

MAR. What did you say?

ORG. What?

MAR. Did I mistake?

ORG. How?

MAR. What would you have me say has touched my heart, father, and whom would it be pleasant to have for a husband, with your approbation?

ORG. Tartuffe.

MAR. But it is nothing of the kind, father, I assure you. Why would you have me tell such a falsehood?

ORG. But I wish it to be a truth; and it is sufficient for you that I have resolved it so.

MAR. What, father would you . . .

ORG. Yes, daughter, I intend by your marriage to unite Tartuffe to my family. He shall be your husband; I have decided that; and as on your duty I . . . (*Perceiving Dorine*). What are you doing here? Your anxious curiosity is very great, my dear, to induce you to listen to us in this manner.

DOR. In truth, I do not know whether this is a mere report, arising from conjecture or from chance; but they have just told me the news of this marriage, and I treated it as a pure hoax.

ORG. Why so! Is the thing incredible?

DOR. So much so, that even from you, Sir, I do not believe it.

ORG. I know how to make you believe it, though.

DOR. Yes, yes, you are telling us a funny story.

ORG. I am telling you exactly what you will see shortly.

DOR. Nonsense!

ORG. What I say is not in jest, daughter.

DOR. Come, do not believe your father; he is joking.

ORG. I tell you . . .

DOR. No, you may say what you like; nobody will believe you.

ORG. My anger will at last . . .

DOR. Very well! we will believe you then; and so much the worse for you. What! is it possible, Sir, that, with that air of common sense, and this great beard in the very midst of your face, you would be foolish enough to be willing to . . .

ORG. Now listen: you have taken certain liberties in this house, which I do not like; I tell you so, my dear.

DOR. Let us speak without getting angry, Sir, I beg. Is it to laugh at people that you have planned this scheme? Your daughter is not suitable for a bigot: he has other things to think about. And, besides, what will such an alliance bring you? Why, with all your wealth, go and choose a beggar for your son-in-law . . .

ORG. Hold your tongue. If he has nothing, know that it is just for that that we ought to esteem him. His poverty is no doubt an honest poverty; it ought to raise him above all grandeur, because he has allowed himself to be deprived of his wealth by his little care for worldly affairs, and his strong attachment to things eternal. But my assistance may give him the means of getting out of his troubles, and of recovering his property. His estates are well known in his country; and, such as you see him, he is quite the nobleman.

DOR. Yes, so he says; and this vanity, Sir, does not accord well with piety. Whosoever embraces the innocence of a holy life should not boast so much about his name and his lineage; and the humble ways of piety do but ill agree with this outburst of ambition. What is the good of this pride . . . But this discourse offends you: let us speak of himself, and leave his nobility alone. Would you, without some compunction, give a girl like her to a man like him? And ought you not to have some regard for propriety, and foresee the consequences of such a union? Be sure that a girl's virtue is in danger when her choice is thwarted in her marriage; that her living virtuously depends upon the qualities of the husband whom they have chosen for her, and that those whose foreheads are pointed at everywhere often make of their wives what we see that they are. It is, in short, no easy task to be faithful to husbands cut out after a certain

model; and he who gives to his daughter a man whom she hates, is responsible to Heaven for the faults she commits. Consider to what perils your design exposes you.

ORG. I tell you I must learn from her what to do!

DOR. You cannot do better than follow my advice.

ORG. Do not let us waste any more time with this silly prattle, daughter; I am your father, and know what is best for you. I had promised you to Valère; but besides his being inclined to gamble, as I am told, I also suspect him to be somewhat of a free-thinker; I never notice him coming to church.

DOR. Would you like him to run there at your stated hours, like those who go there only to be seen?

ORG. I am not asking your advice upon that. The other candidate for your hand is, in short, on the best of terms with Heaven, and that is a treasure second to none. This union will crown your wishes with every kind of blessings, it will be replete with sweetness and delight. You shall live together in faithful love, really like two children, like two turtle-doves; there will be no annoying disputes between you; and you will make anything you like of him.

DOR. She? she will never make anything but a fool⁴³ of him, I assure you.

ORG. Heyday! what language!

DOR. I say that he has the appearance of one, and that his destiny, Sir, will be stronger than all your daughter's virtue.

ORG. Leave off interrupting me, and try to hold your tongue, without poking your nose into what does not concern you.

DOR. (*She continually interrupts him when he turns round to speak to his daughter*). I speak only for your interest, Sir.

ORG. You interest yourself too much; hold your tongue, if you please.

DOR. If one did not care for you . . .

ORG. I do not wish you to care for me.

DOR. And I will care for you, Sir, in spite of yourself.

⁴³ The original has *soit*, which often meant also a victimized husband.

ORG. Ah!

DOR. Your honour is dear to me, and I cannot bear to see you the byeword of everyone.

ORG. You will not hold your tongue?

DOR. It is a matter of conscience to allow you to form such an alliance.

ORG. Will you hold your tongue, you serpent, whose brazen face . . .

DOR. What! you are religious, and fly in a rage!

ORG. Yes, all your nonsense has excited my choler, and once for all, you shall hold your tongue.

DOR. Be it so. But, though I do not say a word, I will think none the less.

ORG. Think, if you like; but take care not to say a word, or . . . (*Turning to his daughter*). That will do. As a sensible man, I have carefully weighed everything.

DOR. (*Aside*). It drives me mad that I must not speak.

ORG. Without being a fop, Tartuffe's mien is such . . .

DOR. Yes, his is a very pretty phiz!

ORG. That even if you have no sympathy with his other gifts . . .

DOR. (*Aside*). She has got a bargain! (*Orgon turns to Dorine, and, with crossed arms, listens and looks her in the face*). If I were in her place, assuredly no man should marry me against my will with impunity; and I would show him, and that soon after the ceremony, that a woman has always a revenge at hand.

ORG. (*To Dorine*). Then you do not heed what I say?

DOR. What are you grumbling at? I did not speak to you.

ORG. What did you do then?

DOR. I was speaking to myself.

ORG. (*Aside*). Very well! I must give her a back-hander to pay her out for her extreme insolence. (*He puts himself into a position to slap Dorine's face; and, at every word which he says to his daughter, he turns round to look at Dorine, who stands bolt upright without speaking*). You ought to approve of my plan, daughter . . . and believe that the husband whom I have selected for you . . . (*To Dorine*). Why do you not speak to yourself?

DOR. I have nothing to say to myself.

ORG. Just another little word.

DOR. It does not suit me.

ORG. I was looking out for you, be sure.

DOR. I am not such a fool as you think me !

ORG. In short, daughter, you must obey, and show a complete deference to my choice.

DOR. (*Running away*). I would not care a straw for such a husband.

ORG. (*Failing to slap Dorine's face*). You have a pestilent hussy with you, daughter, with whom I cannot put up any longer without forgetting myself. I do not feel equal to continue our conversation now ; her insolent remarks have set my brain on fire, and I must have a breath of air to compose myself.

SCENE III.—MARIANE, DORINE.

DOR. Tell me have you lost your speech ? And must I act your part in this affair ? To allow such a senseless proposal to be made to you, without saying the least word against it !

MAR. What would you have me do against a tyrannical father ?

DOR. That which is necessary to ward off such a threat.

MAR. What ?

DOR. Tell him that you cannot love by proxy, that you marry for yourself, and not for him ; that you being the only one concerned in this matter, it is you, and not he, who must like the husband, and that since Tartuffe is so charming in his eyes, he may marry him himself without let or hindrance.

MAR. Ah ! a father, I confess, has so much authority over us, that I have never had the courage to answer him.

DOR. But let us argue this affair. Valère has proposed for you : do you love him, pray, or do you not ?

MAR. Ah ! you do my feelings great injustice, Dorine, to ask me such a question. Have I not a hundred times opened my heart to you ? and do not you know the warmth of my affection for him ?

DOR. How do I know whether your lips have spoken

what your heart felt ? and whether you have any real regard for this lover ?

MAR. You wrong me greatly in doubting it, Dorine ; for my true sentiments have been but too clearly shown.

DOR. You really love him, then ?

MAR. Yes, very passionately.

DOR. And, to all appearance, he loves you as well ?

MAR. I believe so.

DOR. And you are both equally eager to marry each other ?

MAR. Assuredly.

DOR. What do you expect from this other match then ?

MAR. To kill myself, if they force me to it.

DOR. Very well. That is a resource I did not think of ; you have only to die to get out of trouble. The remedy is doubtless admirable. It drives me mad to hear this sort of talk.

MAR. Good gracious ! Dorine, what a temper you get into ! You do not sympathize in the least with people's troubles.

DOR. I do not sympathize with people who talk stupidly, and, when an opportunity presents itself, give way as you do !

MAR. But what would you have me do ? If I am timid . . .

DOR. Love requires firmness.

MAR. But have I wavered in my affection towards Valère ? and is it not his duty to obtain a father's consent ?

DOR. But what ! if your father is a downright churl, who is completely taken up with Tartuffe, and will break off a match he had agreed on, is your lover to be blamed for that ?

MAR. But am I, by a flat refusal and a scornful disdain, to let everyone know how much I am smitten ? However brilliant Valère may be, am I to forget the modesty of my sex, and my filial duty ? And would you have me display my passion to the whole world . . .

DOR. No, I would have you do nothing of the sort. I perceive that you would like to be Mr. Tartuffe's ; and I should be wrong, now that I come to think of it, to turn

you from such a union. What right have I to oppose your wishes? The match in itself is very advantageous. Monsieur Tartuffe! oh, oh! is no small fry. Certainly Monsieur Tartuffe, all things considered, is no fool;⁴⁴ no, not at all, and it is no small honour to be his better half. Already every one crowns him with glory. He is a noble in his own country, handsome in appearance; he has red ears and a florid complexion. You will live only too happily with such a husband.

MAR. Good gracious! . . .

DOR. How joyful you will be to see yourself the wife of such a handsome husband!

MAR. Ah! leave off such talk, I pray, and rather assist me to free myself from this match. It is finished: I yield, and, am ready to do anything.

DOR. No, a daughter ought to obey her father, even if he wishes her to marry an ape. Yours is an enviable fate: of what do you complain? You will drive down in the stage-coach to his native town, where you will find plenty of uncles and cousins, whom it will be your great delight to entertain. You will be introduced directly into the best society. You will go and pay the first visits to the wife of the bailie,⁴⁵ and of the assessor,⁴⁶ who will do you the honour of giving you a folding-chair.⁴⁷ There, at carnival time, you may expect a ball, with the grand band⁴⁸ of musicians, to wit, two bagpipes, and sometimes

⁴⁴ The original has "*Monsieur Tartuffe . . . n'est pas un homme . . . qui se mouche du pied*"; literally, "Mr. Tartuffe . . . is not a man who blows his nose with his foot." To pretend to blow one's nose with one's foot was considered a favourite trick of jugglers and acrobats; hence a man who could do such a thing was no fool.

⁴⁵ The *bailli*, whose office dates probably from the eleventh century, was the representative of the king or lord in the northern provinces of France; whilst in the west and south he was called the *sénéchal*. But, in Molière's time, the duties of their office had been much reduced; they could no longer call out the military force, or regulate the finances of any province. They were simply a kind of minor judges, though nominally at the head of the provincial nobility.

⁴⁶ In French *l'éluc*. The *éluc* was a kind of assessor who regulated the taxes.

⁴⁷ A folding-chair was always given to people of inferior rank to sit on when in the presence of their superiors.

⁴⁸ In French *la grand' bande*. In Molière's time any band of musicians was called *une bande*, just as in English "band" is used now. There

Fagotin⁴⁹ and the marionnettes. If your husband, however . . .

MAR. Oh! you kill me. Try rather to assist me with your counsels.

DOR. I am your servant.

MAR. Ah! for pity's sake, Dorine . . .

DOR. This affair ought to go on, to punish you.

MAR. There is a good girl!

DOR. No.

MAR. If I declare to you that . . .

DOR. Not at all. Tartuffe is your man, and you shall have a taste of him.

MAR. You know that I have always confided in you: do . . .

DOR. No, it is of no use, you shall be Tartuffed.

MAR. Very well, since my misfortunes cannot move you, leave me henceforth entirely to my despair. My heart shall seek help from that; and I know an infallible remedy for my sufferings. *(She wishes to go.)*

DOR. Stop, stop, come back. I give in. In spite of all, I must take compassion on you.

MAR. Look here, Dorine, if they inflict this cruel martyrdom upon me, I shall die of it, I tell you.

DOR. Do not worry yourself. We will cleverly prevent . . . But here comes Valère, your lover.

SCENE IV.—VALÈRE, MARIANE, DORINE.

VAL. I have just been told a piece of news, Madam, which I did not know, and which is certainly very pretty.

MAR. What is it?

VAL. That you are going to be married to Tartuffe.

MAR. My father has taken this idea into his head, certainly.

VAR. Your father, Madam . . .

MAR. Has altered his mind: he has just proposed this affair to me.

was then at Court *la bande des Vingt-Quatre*, or the great violins, and *la petite bande*, or the little violins, of which Lulli was the conductor. There was also a third *bande*, that of the *Grande-Écurie*.

⁴⁹ Fagotin was the name of a famous trained monkey, very much admired in Paris, in Molière's time. La Fontaine mentions him in his fable of *The Court of the Lion*.

VAL. What ! seriously ?

MAR. Yes, seriously, he has openly declared himself for this match.

VAL. And what have you decided, in your own mind, Madam ?

MAR. I know not.

VAL. The answer is polite. You know not ?

MAR. No.

VAL. No ?

MAR. What do you advise me ?

VAL. I, I advise you to take this husband.

MAR. Is that your advice ?

VAL. Yes.

MAR. Seriously ?

VAL. Doubtless. The choice is glorious, and well worth consideration.

MAR. Very well, Sir, I shall act upon the advice.

VAL. That will not be very painful, I think.

MAR. Not more painful than for you to give it.

VAL. I gave it to please you, Madam.

MAR. And I shall follow it to please you.

DOR. (*Retiring to the further part of the stage*). Let us see what this will come to.

VAL. This then is your affection ? And it was all deceit when you . . .

MAR. Do not let us speak of that, I pray. You have told me quite candidly that I ought to accept the husband selected for me ; and I declare that I intend to do so, since you give me this wholesome advice.

VAL. Do not make my advice your excuse. Your resolution was taken beforehand ; and you catch at a frivolous pretext to justify the breaking of your word.

MAR. Very true, and well put.

VAL. No doubt ; and you never had any real affection for me.

MAR. Alas ! think so, if you like.

VAL. Yes, yes, if I like ; but my offended feelings may perhaps forestall you in such a design ; and I know where to offer both my heart and my hand.

MAR. Ah ! I have no doubt of it ; and the love which merit can command . . .

VAL. For Heaven's sake, let us drop merit. I have but little, no doubt; and you have given proof of it. But I hope much from the kindness of some one whose heart is open to me, and who will not be ashamed to consent to repair my loss.

MAR. The loss is not great: and you will easily enough console yourself for this change.

VAL. I shall do my utmost, you may depend. A heart that forgets us wounds our self-love; we must do our best to forget it also; if we do not succeed, we must at least pretend to do so: for the meanness is unpardonable of still loving when we are forsaken.

MAR. This is, no doubt, an elevated and noble sentiment.

VAL. It is so; and every one must approve of it. What! would you have me forever to nourish my ardent affection for you, and not elsewhere bestow that heart which you reject, whilst I see you, before my face, pass into the arms of another?

MAR. On the contrary; as for me, that is what I would have you do, and I wish it were done already.

VAL. You wish it?

MAR. Yes.

VAL. That is a sufficient insult, Madam; and I shall satisfy you this very moment. *(He pretends to go.)*

MAR. Very well.

VAL. *(Coming back)*. Remember at least, that you yourself drive me to this extremity.

MAR. Yes.

VAL. *(Coming back once more)*. And that I am only following your example.

MAR. Very well, my example.

VAL. *(Going)*. That will do: you shall be obeyed on the spot.

MAR. So much the better.

VAL. *(Coming back again)*. This is the last time that you will ever see me.

MAR. That is right.

VAL. *(Goes, and turns round at the door)*. He?

MAR. What is the matter?

VAL. Did not you call me?

MAR. I! You are dreaming.

VAL. Well! then I will be gone. Farewell, Madam.

(He goes slowly.)

MAR. Farewell, Sir.

DOR. *(To Mariane)*. I think that you are losing your senses with all this folly. I have all along allowed you to quarrel, to see what it would lead to at last. Hullo, Mr. Valère.

(She takes hold of Valère's arm.)

VAL. *(Pretending to resist)*. He? what do you want, Dorine?

DOR. Come here.

VAL. No, no, I feel too indignant. Do not hinder me from doing as she wishes me.

DOR. Stop.

VAL. No; look here, I have made up my mind.

DOR. Ah!

MAR. *(Aside)*. He cannot bear to see me, my presence drives him away; and I had therefore much better leave the place.

DOR. *(Quitting Valère and running after Mariane)*. Now for the other! Where are you running to?

MAR. Let me alone.

DOR. You must come back.

MAR. No, no, Dorine; it is of no use detaining me.

VAL. *(Aside)*. I see, but too well, that the sight of me annoys her; and I had, no doubt, better free her from it.

DOR. *(Leaving Mariane and running after Valère)*. What, again! The devil take you! Yes. I will have it so. Cease this fooling, and come here both of you.

(She holds them both.)

VAL. *(To Dorine)*. But what are you about?

MAR. *(To Dorine)*. What would you do?

DOR. I would have you make it up together, and get out of this scrape. *(To Valère)*. Are you mad to wrangle in this way?

VAL. Did you not hear how she spoke to me?

DOR. *(To Mariane)*. Are you silly to have got into such a passion?

MAR. Did you not see the thing, and how he has treated me?

DOR. Folly on both sides. *(To Valère)*. She has no

other wish than to remain yours, I can vouch for it. (*To Mariane*). He loves none but you, and desires nothing more than to be your husband. I will answer for it with my life.

MAR. (*To Valère*). Why then did you give me such advice?

VAL. (*To Mariane*). Why did you ask me for it on such a subject?

DOR. You are a pair of fools. Come, your hands, both of you. (*To Valère*). Come, yours.

VAL. (*Giving his hand to Dorine*). What is the good of my hand?

DOR. (*To Mariane*). Come now! yours.

MAR. (*Giving hers*). What is the use of all this?

DOR. Good Heavens! quick, come on. You love each other better than you think. (*Valère and Mariane hold each other's hands for some time without speaking*).

VAL. (*Turning towards Mariane*), Do not do things with such a bad grace, and cast a glance upon one without any hatred. (*Mariane turns to Valère, and smiles on him*).

DOR. Truth to tell, lovers are great fools!

VAL. (*To Mariane*). Now really! have I no reason to complain of you; and, without an untruth, are you not a naughty girl to delight in saying disagreeable things?

MAR. And you, are you not the most ungrateful fellow . . .

DOR. Leave all this debate till another time, and let us think about averting this confounded marriage.

MAR. Tell us, then, what we are to do.

DOR. We must do many things. (*To Mariane*). Your father does but jest; (*To Valère*), and it is all talk. (*To Mariane*). But as for you, you had better appear to comply quietly with his nonsense, so that, in case of need, it may be easier for you to put off this proposed marriage. In gaining time, we gain everything. Sometimes you can pretend a sudden illness, that will necessitate a delay; then you can pretend some evil omens, that you unluckily met a corpse, broke a looking-glass, or dreamed of muddy water. In short, the best of it is that they cannot unite you to any one else but him, unless you please to say yes. But, the better to succeed, I think it advisable that you

should not be seen talking together. (*To Valère*). Now go; and without delay, employ your friends to make Orgon keep his promise to you. We will interest her brother, and enlist her mother-in-law on our side. Good-bye.

VAL. (*To Mariane*). Whatever efforts we may make together, my greatest hope, to tell the truth, is in you.

MAR. (*To Valère*). I cannot answer for the will of a father; but I shall be no one but Valère's.

VAL. Oh, how happy you make me! And, whatever they may attempt . . .

DOR. Ah! lovers are never weary of prattling. Be off, I tell you.

VAL. (*Goes a step, and returns*). After all . . .

DOR. What a cackle! Go you this way; and you, the other. (*Dorine pushes each of them by the shoulder, and compels them to separate.*)

ACT III.

SCENE I.—DAMIS, DORINE.

DAM. May lightning strike me dead on the spot, may every one treat me as the greatest of scoundrels, if any respect or authority shall stop me from doing something rash!

DOR. Curb this temper for Heaven's sake: your father did but mention it. People do not carry out all their proposals; and the road between the saying and the doing is a long one.

DAM. I must put a stop to this fellow's plots, and whisper a word or two in his ear.

DOR. Gently, pray! leave him, and your father as well, to your mother-in-law's management. She has some influence with Tartuffe: he agrees to all that she says, and I should not wonder if he had some sneaking regard for her. Would to Heaven that it were true! A pretty thing that would be.⁵⁰ In short, your interest obliges her to send

⁵⁰ This is the third time the audience has heard that Tartuffe loves El-mire, and Molière does this in order that the public should not afterwards be too suddenly horrified when the hypocrite is unmasked.

for him: she wishes to sound him about this marriage that troubles you, to know his intentions, and to acquaint him with the sad contentions which he may cause, if he entertains any hope on this subject. His servant told me he was at prayers, and that I could not get sight of him; but said that he was coming down. Go, therefore, I pray you, and let me wait for him.

DAM. I may be present at this interview.

— DOR. Not at all. They must be alone.

DAM. I shall not say a word to him.

DOR. You deceive yourself: we know your usual outbursts; and that is just the way to spoil all. Go.

DAM. No; I will see, without getting angry.

DOR. How tiresome you are! Here he comes. Go away. (*Damis hides himself in a closet at the farther end of the stage*).

SCENE II.—TARTUFFE, DORINE.

TAR. (*The moment he perceives Dorine, he begins to speak loudly to his servant, who is behind*).⁵¹ Laurent, put away my hair shirt and my scourge, and pray that Heaven may ever enlighten you. If any one calls to see me, say that I have gone to the prisoners to distribute the alms which I have received.

DOR. (*Aside*). What affectation and boasting!

TAR. What do you want?

DOR. To tell you . . .

TAR. (*Pulling a handkerchief from his pocket*). For Heaven's sake! before you go any farther, take this handkerchief, I pray.

DOR. For what?

TAR. Cover this bosom, which I cannot bear to see. The spirit is offended by such sights, and they evoke sinful thoughts.

DOR. You are, then, mighty susceptible to temptation; and the flesh seems to make a great impression on your

⁵¹ The foul hero of the play only makes his appearance now, in the second Scene of the third Act. According to the *Lettre sur l'Imposteur* (see Introductory Notice, page 377), this was done by Molière on purpose, because such a character could appear only when the action was in full force.

senses ! I cannot tell, of course, what heat inflames you : but my desires are not so easily aroused ; and I could see you naked from top to toe, without being in the least tempted by the whole of your skin.

TAR. Be a little more modest in your expressions, or I shall leave you on the spot.

DOR. No, no, it is I who am going to leave you to yourself ; and I have only two words to say to you. My mistress is coming down into this parlour, and wishes the favor of a minute's conversation with you.

TAR. Alas ! with all my heart.

DOR. (*Aside*). How he softens down ! Upon my word, I stick to what I have said of him.

TAR. Will she be long ?

DOR. Methinks I hear her. Yes, it is herself, and I leave you together.

SCENE III.—ELMIRE, TARTUFFE.

TAR. May Heaven, in its mighty goodness, for ever bestow upon you health, both of soul and body, and bless your days as much as the humblest of its votaries desires.

ELM. I am much obliged for this pious wish. But let us take a seat, to be more at ease.

TAR. (*Seated*). Are you quite recovered from your indisposition ?

ELM. (*Seated*). Quite ; this fever has soon left me.

TAR. My prayers are not deserving enough to have drawn this grace from above ; but not one of them ascended to Heaven that had not your recovery for its object.

ELM. You are too anxious in your zeal for me.

TAR. We cannot cherish your dear health too much ; and to re-establish yours, I would have given mine.

ELM. That is pushing Christian charity very far ; and I feel much indebted to you for all this kindness.

TAR. I do much less for you than you deserve.

ELM. I wished to speak to you in private about a certain matter, and am glad that no one is here to observe us.

TAR. I am equally delighted ; and no doubt, it is very pleasant to me, Madam, to find myself alone with you. I

have often asked this opportunity from Heaven, but, till now, in vain.

ELM. What I wish is a few words with you, upon a small matter, in which you bare your heart and conceal nothing from me. (*Damis, without showing himself, half opens the door of the closet into which he had retired to listen to the conversation*).

TAR. And I will also, in return for this rare favour, unbosom myself entirely to you, and swear to you that the reports which I have spread about the visits which you receive in homage of your charms, do not spring from any hatred towards you, but rather from a passionate zeal which carries me away, and out of a pure motive . . .

ELM. That is how I take it. I think it is for my good that you trouble yourself so much.

TAR. (*Taking Elmire's hand and pressing her fingers*). Yes, Madam, no doubt; and my fervour is such . . .

ELM. Oh! you squeeze me too hard.

TAR. It is through excess of zeal. I never had any intention of hurting you, and would sooner . . . (*He places his hand on Elmire's knee*).

ELM. What does your hand there?

TAR. I am only feeling your dress: the stuff is very soft.

ELM. Oh! please leave off, I am very ticklish. (*Elmire pushes her chair back, and Tartuffe draws near with his*).

TAR. (*Handling the collar of Elmire*). Bless me! how wonderful is the workmanship of this lace! They work in a miraculous manner now-a-days; never was anything so beautifully made.⁵²

ELM. It is true. But let us have some talk about our affair. I have been told that my husband wishes to retract his promise, and give you his daughter. Is it true? Tell me.

TAR. He has hinted something to me; but to tell you the truth, Madam, that is not the happiness for which I

⁵² Rabelais, in the sixteenth chapter of the second book of *Pantagruel*, says of Panurge: "When he came into the company of some good ladies, he would trifle them into a discourse of some fine workmanship of bone-lace, and then immediately put his hand into their bosom, asking them, 'And this work, is it of Flanders, or of Hainault?'"

am sighing : I behold elsewhere the marvellous attractions of that bliss which forms the height of my wishes.

ELM. That is because you have no love for earthly things.

TAR. My breast does not contain a heart of flint.

ELM. I believe that all your sighs tend towards Heaven, and that nothing here below rouses your desires.

TAR. The love which attaches us to éternal beauties does not stifle in us the love of earthly things; our senses may easily be charmed by the perfect works which Heaven has created. Its reflected loveliness shines forth in such as you; but in you alone it displays its choicest wonders. It has diffused on your face such beauty, that it dazzles the eyes and transports the heart; nor could I behold you, perfect creature, without admiring in you nature's author, and feeling my heart smitten with an ardent love for the most beautiful of portraits, wherein he has reproduced himself. At first I feared that this secret ardour might be nothing but a cunning snare of the foul fiend; and my heart even resolved to fly your presence, thinking that you might be an obstacle to my salvation. But at last I found, oh most lovely beauty, that my passion could not be blameable; that I could reconcile it with modesty; and this made me freely indulge it. It is, I confess, a great presumption in me to dare to offer you this heart; but I expect, in my affections, everything from your kindness, and nothing from the vain efforts of my own weakness. In you is my hope, my happiness, my peace; on you depends my torment or my bliss; and it is by your decision solely that I shall be happy if you wish it; or miserable, if it pleases you.

ELM. The declaration is exceedingly gallant; but it is, to speak truly, rather a little surprising. Methinks you ought to arm your heart better, and to reflect a little upon such a design. A pious man like you, and who is everywhere spoken of . . .

TAR. Ah! although I am a pious man, I am not the less a man;⁵³ and, when one beholds your heavenly

⁵³ Some annotators of Molière pretend that he took this line from Corneille's tragedy, *Sertorius*, where we find, "And though I am a Roman, I am not the less a man." It is also found in the eighth tale of the third day of Boccaccio's *Decameron*.

charms, the heart surrenders and reasons no longer. I know that such discourse from me must appear strange; but, after all, Madam, I am not an angel; and if my confession be condemned by you, you must blame your own attractions for it. As soon as I beheld their more than human loveliness, you became the queen of my soul. The ineffable sweetness of your divine glances broke down the resistance of my obstinate heart; it overcame everything—fastings, prayers, tears—and led all my desires to your charms. My looks and my sighs have told you so a thousand times; and, the better to explain myself, I now make use of words. If you should graciously contemplate the tribulations of your unworthy slave; if your kindness would console me, and will condescend to stoop to my insignificant self, I shall ever entertain for you, oh miracle of sweetness, an unexampled devotion. Your honour runs not the slightest risk with me, and need not fear the least disgrace on my part. All these court gallants, of whom women are so fond, are noisy in their doings and vain in their talk; they are incessantly pluming themselves on their successes, and they receive no favours which they do not divulge. Their indiscreet tongues, in which people confide, desecrate the altar on which their hearts sacrifice. But men of our stamp love discreetly, and with them a secret is always surely kept. The care which we take of our own reputation is a sufficient guarantee for the object of our love; and it is only with us, when they accept our hearts, that they find love without scandal, and pleasure without fear.⁵⁴

ELM. I have listened to what you say, and your rhetoric explains itself in sufficiently strong terms to me. But are you not afraid that the fancy may take me to tell my husband of this gallant ardour; and that the prompt knowledge of such an amour might well change the friendship which he bears you.

TAR. I know that you are too gracious, and that you will pardon my boldness; that you will excuse, on the

⁵⁴ Boccaccio's *Féronde* uses some of Tartuffe's expressions in the tale mentioned in note 53. Regnier's *Macette* says also: "More discreet, they (the hypocrites) know, in loving, to give more satisfaction, though with less ostentation."

score of human frailty, the violent transports of a passion which offends you, and consider, by looking at yourself, that people are not blind, and men are made of flesh and blood.

ELM. Others would perhaps take it in a different fashion; but I shall show my discretion. I shall not tell the matter to my husband: but in return, I require something of you: that is, to forward, honestly and without quibbling, the union of Valère with Mariane, to renounce the unjust power which would enrich you with what belongs to another; and . . .

SCENE IV.—ELMIRE, DAMIS, TARTUFFE.

DAM. (*Coming out of the closet in which he was hidden*). No, Madam, no; this shall be made public. I was in there when I overheard it all; and Providence seems to have conducted me thither to abash the pride of a wretch who wrongs me; to point me out a way to take vengeance on his hypocrisy and insolence; to undeceive my father, and to show him plainly the heart of a villain who talks to you of love.

ELM. No, Damis; it suffices that he reforms, and endeavours to deserve my indulgence. Since I have promised him, do not make me break my word. I have no wish to provoke a scandal; a woman laughs at such follies, and never troubles her husband's ears with them.

DAM. You have your reasons for acting in that way, and I also have mine for behaving differently. It is a farce to wish to spare him; and the insolent pride of his bigotry has already triumphed too much over my just anger, and caused too much disorder amongst us. The scoundrel has governed my father too long, and plotted against my affections as well as Valère's. My father must be undeceived about this perfidious wretch; and Heaven offers me an easy means. I am indebted to it for this opportunity, and it is too favourable to be neglected. I should deserve to have it snatched away from me, did I not make use of it, now that I have it in hand.

ELM. Damis . . .

DAM. No, by your leave, I will use my own judgment. I am highly delighted: and all you can say will be in vain

to make me forego the pleasure of revenge. I shall settle this affair without delay; and here is just the opportunity.

SCENE V.—ORGON, ELMIRE, DAMIS, TARTUFFE.

DAM. We will enliven your arrival, father, with an altogether fresh incident, that will surprise you much. You are well repaid for all your caresses, and this gentleman rewards your tenderness handsomely. His great zeal for you has just shown itself; he aims at nothing less than at dishonouring you; and I have just surprised him making to your wife an insulting avowal of a guilty passion. Her sweet disposition, and her too discreet feelings would by all means have kept the secret from you; but I cannot encourage such insolence, and think that to have been silent about it would have been to do you an injury.

ELM. Yes, I am of opinion that we ought never to trouble a husband's peace with all those silly stories; that our honour does not depend upon that; and that it is enough for us to be able to defend ourselves. These are my sentiments; and you would have said nothing, Damis, if I had had any influence with you.

SCENE VI.—ORGON, DAMIS, TARTUFFE.

ORG. What have I heard! Oh Heavens! is it credible?

TAR. Yes, brother, I am a wicked, guilty, wretched sinner, full of iniquity, the greatest villain that ever existed. Each moment of my life is replete with pollutions; it is but a mass of crime and corruption; and I see that Heaven, to chastise me, intends to mortify me on this occasion. Whatever great crime may be laid to my charge, I have neither the wish nor the pride to deny it. Believe what you are told, arm your anger, and drive me like a criminal from your house. Whatever shame you may heap upon me, I deserve still more.

ORG. (*To his Son*). What, wretch! dare you, by this falsehood, tarnish the purity of his virtue?

DAM. What, shall the pretended gentleness of this hypocrite make you belie . . .

ORG. Peace, cursed plague!

TAR. Ah! let him speak; you accuse him wrongly, and



TARTUFFE, OR THE HYPOCRITE.

you had much better believe in his story. Why will you be so favourable to me after hearing such a fact? Are you, after all, aware of what I am capable? Why trust to my exterior, brother, and why, for all that is seen, believe me to be better than I am? No, no, you allow yourself to be deceived by appearances, and I am, alas! nothing less than what they think me. Everyone takes me to be a godly man, but the real truth is that I am very worthless. (*Addressing himself to Damis*). Yes, my dear child, say on; call me a perfidious, infamous, lost wretch, a thief, a murderer; load me with still more detestable names: I shall not contradict you, I have deserved them; and I am willing on my knees to suffer ignominy, as a disgrace due to the crimes of my life.⁵⁵

ORG. (*To Tartuffe*). This is too much, brother. (*To his Son*). Does not your heart relent, wretch?

DAM. What! shall his words deceive you so far as to . . .

ORG. Hold your tongue, you hangdog. (*Raising Tartuffe*). Rise, brother, I beseech you. (*To his Son*). Infamous wretch!

DAM. He can . . .

ORG. Hold your tongue.

DAM. I burst with rage. What! I am looked upon as . . .

ORG. Say another word, and I will break your bones.

TAR. In Heaven's name, brother, do not forget yourself! I would rather suffer the greatest hardship, than that he should receive the slightest hurt for my sake.

ORG. (*To his Son*). Ungrateful monster!

TAR. Leave him in peace. If I must on both knees, ask you to pardon him . . .

ORG. (*Throwing himself on his knees also, and embracing Tartuffe*). Alas! are you in jest? (*To his Son*). Behold his goodness, scoundrel!

DAM. Thus . . .

ORG. Cease.

DAM. What! I . . .

⁵⁵ Compare this speech of Tartuffe with Montufar's, in Scarron's tale *The Hypocrites*, in the Introductory Notice to this play, page 365.

ORG. Peace, I tell you : I know too well the motive of your attack. You all hate him, and I now perceive wife, children, and servants all let loose against him. Every trick is impudently resorted to to remove this pious person from my house ; but the more efforts they put forth to banish him, the more shall I employ to keep him here, and I shall hasten to give him my daughter, to abash the pride of my whole family.

DAM. Do you mean to compel her to accept him ?

ORG. Yes, wretch ! and to enrage you, this very evening. Yes ! I defy you all, and shall let you know that I am the master, and that I will be obeyed. Come, retract ; throw yourself at his feet immediately, you scoundrel, and ask his pardon.

DAM. What ! I at the feet of this rascal who, by his impostures . . .

ORG. What, you resist, you beggar, and insult him besides ! (*To Tartuffe*). A cudgel ! a cudgel ! do not hold me back.⁵⁶ (*To his Son*). Out of my house, this minute, and never dare to come back to it.

DAM. Yes, I shall go ; but . . .

ORG. Quick, leave the place, I disinherit you, you hound, and give you my curse besides.

SCENE VII.—ORGON, TARTUFFE.

ORG. To offend a saintly person in that way !

TAR. Forgive him, oh Heaven ! the pang he causes me.⁵⁷ (*To Orgon*). Could you but know my grief at seeing myself blackened in my brother's sight . . .

ORG. Alas !

TAR. The very thought of this ingratitude tortures my soul to that extent . . . The horror I conceive of it

⁵⁶ Some actors, whilst playing the part of Tartuffe, do not move whilst Orgon is shouting "do not hold me back." But Molière can never have intended to let the spectator suppose that Tartuffe wished Damis to be beaten. On the contrary, his pretended opposition to Orgon's passion heightens his influence ; for an angry father, when his passion is abated, cannot take it amiss that a stranger prevents him from chastising his son.

⁵⁷ According to tradition,—a tradition supported by the actor Baron, a pupil of Molière,—this line was originally "Forgive him, O Heaven, as I forgive him ;" but it was altered, because some people said it was a parody on a passage in the Lord's Prayer.

. . . My heart is so oppressed that I cannot speak, and I believe it will be my death.

ORG. (*Running, all in tears, towards the door, by which his son has disappeared*). Scoundrel! I am sorry my hand has spared you, and not knocked you down on the spot. (*To Tartuffe*). Compose yourself, brother, and do not grieve.

TAR. Let us put an end to these sad disputes. I perceive what troubles I cause in this house, and think it necessary, brother, to leave it.

ORG. What! you are jesting surely?

TAR. They hate me, and I find that they are trying to make you suspect my integrity.

ORG. What does it matter? Do you think that, in my heart, I listen to them?

TAR. They will not fail to continue, you may be sure; and these self-same stories which you now reject, may, perhaps, be listened to at another time.

ORG. No, brother, never.

TAR. Ah, brother! a wife may easily impose upon a husband.

ORG. No, no.

TAR. Allow me, by removing hence promptly, to deprive them of all subject of attack

ORG. No, you shall remain; my life depends upon it.

TAR. Well! I must then mortify myself. If, however, you would . . .

ORG. Ah!

TAR. Be it so: let us say no more about it. But I know how to manage in this. Honour is a tender thing, and friendship enjoins me to prevent reports and causes for suspicion. I shall shun your wife, and you shall not see me . . .

ORG. No, in spite of all, you shall frequently be with her. To annoy the world is my greatest delight; and I wish you to be seen with her at all times. Nor is this all: the better to defy them all, I will have no other heir but you, and I am going forthwith to execute a formal deed of gift of all my property to you. A faithful and honest friend, whom I take for son-in-law, is dearer to me than son, wife, and parents. Will you not accept what I propose?

TAR. The will of Heaven be done in all things.

ORG. Poor fellow. Quick! let us get the draft drawn up: and then let envy itself burst with spite!

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—CLÈANTE, TARTUFFE.

CLE. Yes, everyone talks about it, and you may believe me. The stir which this rumour makes is not at all to your credit; and I have just met you, Sir, opportunely, to tell you my opinion in two words. I will not sift these reports to the bottom; I refrain, and take the thing at its worst. Let us suppose that Damis has not acted well, and that you have been wrongly accused; would it not be like a Christian to pardon the offence, and to smother all desire of vengeance in your heart? And ought you, on account of a dispute with you, to allow a son to be driven from his father's home? I tell you once more, and candidly, that great and small are scandalized at it; and, if you will take my advice, you will try to make peace, and not push matters to extremes. Make a sacrifice to God of your resentment, and restore a son to his father's favour.

TAR. Alas! for my own part, I would do so with all my heart. I do not bear him, Sir, the slightest ill-will; I forgive him everything; I blame him for nothing; and would serve him to the best of my power. But Heaven's interest is opposed to it; and, if he comes back, I must leave the house. After his unparalleled behaviour, communication with him would give rise to scandal: Heaven knows what all the world would immediately think of it! They would impute it to sheer policy on my part; and they would say everywhere, that knowing myself to be guilty, I pretend a charitable zeal for my accuser; that I am afraid, and wish to conciliate him, in order to bribe him, in an underhand manner, into silence.

CLE. You try to put forward pretended excuses, and all your reasons, Sir, are too far-fetched. Why do you charge yourself with Heaven's interests? Has it any need of us to punish the guilty? Leave to it the care of its own

vengeance; think only of the pardon which it enjoins for offences, and do not trouble yourself about men's judgments, when you are following the sovereign edicts of Heaven. What! shall the trivial regard for what men may think prevent the glory of a good action? No, no; let us always do what Heaven prescribes, and not trouble our heads with other cares.

TAR. I have already told you that from my heart I forgive him; and that, Sir, is doing what Heaven commands us to do: but after the scandal and the insult of to-day, Heaven does not require me to live with him.

CLE. And does it require you, Sir, to lend your ear to what a mere whim dictates to his father, and to accept the gift of a property to which in justice you have no claim whatever?

TAR. Those who know me will not think that this proceeds from self-interest. All the world's goods have but few charms for me; I am not dazzled by their deceptive glare: and should I determine to accept from his father that donation which he wishes to make to me, it is only, in truth, because I fear that all that property might fall into wicked hands; lest it might be divided amongst those who would make a bad use of it in this world, and would not employ it, as I intend, for the glory of Heaven and the well-being of my fellow-men.

CLE. Oh, Sir, you need not entertain those delicate scruples, which may give cause for the rightful heir to complain. Allow him at his peril to enjoy his own, without troubling yourself in any way; and consider that it is better even that he should make a bad use of it, than that you should be accused of defrauding him of it. My only wonder is, that you could have received such a proposal unblushingly. For after all, has true piety any maxim showing how a legitimate heir may be stripped of his property? And if Heaven has put into your head an invincible obstacle to your living with Damis, would it not be better that as a prudent man you should make a civil retreat from this, than to allow that, contrary to all reason, the son should be turned out of the house for you. Believe me, Sir, this would be giving a proof of your probity. . .

TAR. Sir, it is half past three: certain religious duties

call me upstairs, and you will excuse my leaving you so soon.

CLE. (*Alone*). Ah!

SCENE II.—ELMIRE, MARIANE, CLÉANTE, DORINE.

DOR. (*To Cléante*). For Heaven's sake, Sir, bestir yourself with us for her: she is in mortal grief; and the marriage contract which her father has resolved upon being signed this evening, drives her every moment to despair. Here he comes! Pray, let us unite our efforts, and try, by force or art, to shake this unfortunate design that causes us all this trouble.

SCENE III.—ORGON, ELMIRE, MARIANE, CLÉANTE, DORINE.

ORG. Ah! I am glad to see you all assembled. (*To Mariane*). There is something in this document to please you, and you know already what it means.

MAR. (*At Orgon's feet*). Father, in the name of Heaven which knows my grief, and by all that can move your heart, relax somewhat of your paternal rights, and absolve me from obedience in this case. Do not compel me, by this harsh command, to reproach Heaven with my duty to you; and alas! do not make wretched the life which you have given me, father. If, contrary to the sweet expectations which I have formed, you forbid me to belong to him whom I have dared to love, kindly save me at least, I implore you on my knees, from the torment of belonging to one whom I abhor; and do not drive me to despair by exerting your full power over me.

ORG. (*Somewhat moved*). Firm, my heart; none of this human weakness!

MAR. Your tenderness for him causes me no grief; indulge it to its fullest extent, give him your wealth, and if that be not enough, add mine to it; I consent to it with all my heart, and I leave you to dispose of it. But, at least, stop short of my own self; and allow me to end, in the austerities of a convent, the sad days which Heaven has allotted to me.

ORG. Ah, that is it! When a father crosses a girl's love-sick inclination, she wishes to become a nun. Get

up. The more repugnance you feel in accepting him, the greater will be your merit. Mortify your senses by this marriage, and do not trouble me any longer.

DOR. But what . . .

ORG. Hold your tongue. Meddle only with what concerns you. I flatly forbid you to say another word.

CLE. If you will permit me to answer you, and advise . . .

ORG. Your advice is the best in the world, brother ; it is well argued, and I set great store by it : but you must allow me not to avail myself of it.

ELM. (*To her husband*). I am at a loss what to say, after all I have seen ; and I quite admire your blindness. You must be mightily bewitched and prepossessed in his favour, to deny to us the incidents of this day.

ORG. I am your servant, and judge by appearances. I know your indulgence for my rascal of a son, and you were afraid of disowning the trick which he wished to play on the poor fellow. But, after all, you took it too quietly to be believed ; and you ought to have appeared somewhat more upset.

ELM. Is our honour to bridle up so strongly at the simple avowal of an amorous transport, and can there be no reply to aught that touches it, without fury in our eyes and invectives in our mouth ? As for me, I simply laugh at such talk ; and the noise made about it by no means pleases me. I love to show my discreteness quietly, and am not at all like those savage prudes, whose honour is armed with claws and teeth, and who at the least word would scratch people's faces. Heaven preserve me from such good behaviour ! I prefer a virtue that is not diabolical, and believe that a discreet and cold denial is no less effective in repelling a lover.

ORG. In short, I know the whole affair, and will not be imposed upon.

ELM. Once more, I wonder at your strange weakness ; but what would your unbelief answer if I were to show you that you had been told the truth.

ORG. Show !

ELM. Aye.

ORG. Stuff.

ELM. But if I found the means to show you plainly? . . .

ORG. Idle stories.

ELM. What a strange man! Answer me, at least. I am not speaking of believing us; but suppose that we found a place where you could plainly see and hear everything, what would you say then of your good man?

ORG. In that case, I should say that . . . I should say nothing, for the thing cannot be.

ELM. Your delusion has lasted too long, and I have been too much taxed with imposture. I must, for my gratification, without going any farther, make you a witness of all that I have told you.

ORG. Be it so. I take you at your word. We shall see your dexterity, and how you will make good this promise.

ELM. (*To Dorine*). Bid him come to me.

DOR. (*To Elmire*). He is crafty, and it will be difficult, perhaps, to catch him.

ELM. (*To Dorine*). No; people are easily duped by those whom they love, and conceit is apt to deceive itself. Bid him come down. (*To Cléante and Mariane*). And do you retire.

SCENE IV.—ELMIRE, ORGON.

ELM. Come, and get under this table.

ORG. Why so?

ELM. It is necessary that you should conceal yourself well.

ORG. But why under this table?

ELM. Good Heavens! do as you are told; I have thought about my plan, and you shall judge. Get under there, I tell you, and, when you are there, take care not to be seen or heard.

ORG. I confess that my complaisance is great; but I must needs see the end of your enterprize.

ELM. You will have nothing, I believe, to reply to me. (*To Orgon under the table*). Mind! I am going to meddle with a strange matter, do not be shocked in any way. I must be permitted to say what I like; and it is to convince you, as I have promised. Since I am compelled to it, I am going to make this hypocrite drop his mask by addressing soft speeches to him, flatter the shameful de-

sires of his passion, and give him full scope for his audacity. As it is for your sake alone, and the better to confound him, that I pretend to yield to his wishes, I shall cease as soon as you show yourself, and things need not go farther than you wish. It is for you to stop his mad passion, when you think matters are carried far enough, to spare your wife, and not to expose me any more than is necessary to disabuse you. This is your business, it remains entirely with you, and ⁵⁸ . . . But he comes. Keep close, and be careful not to show yourself.

SCENE V.—TARTUFFE, ELMIRE, ORGON (*under the table*).

TAR. I have been told that you wished to speak to me here.

ELM. Yes. Some secrets will be revealed to you. But close this door before they are told to you, and look about everywhere, for fear of a surprise. (*Tartuffe closes the door, and comes back*). We assuredly do not want here a scene like the one we just passed through: I never was so startled in my life. Damis put me in a terrible fright for you; and you saw, indeed, that I did my utmost to frustrate his intentions and calm his excitement. My confusion, it is true, was so great, that I had not a thought of contradicting him: but, thanks to Heaven, everything has turned out the better for that, and is upon a much surer footing. The esteem in which you are held has allayed the storm, and my husband will not take any umbrage at you. The better to brave people's ill-natured comments, he wishes us to be together at all times; and it is through this that, without fear of incurring blame, I can be closetted here alone with you; and this justifies me in opening to you my heart, a little too ready perhaps, to listen to your passion.

TAR. This language is somewhat difficult to under-

⁵⁸ These words of Elmire are, in reality, addressed to the audience, to remind them of the necessity of unmasking the hypocrite; they contain also an excuse for her farther behaviour; for, in spite of her modesty, she is compelled to give convincing proof to her husband that Tartuffe is a scoundrel.

stand, Madam ; and you just now spoke in quite a different strain.

ELM. Ah ! how little you know the heart of a woman, if such a refusal makes you angry ! and how little you understand what it means to convey, when it defends itself so feebly ! In those moments, our modesty always combats the tender sentiments with which we may be inspired.⁵⁹ Whatever reason we may find for the passion that subdues us, we always feel some shame in owning it. We deny it at first : but in such a way as to give you sufficiently to understand that our heart surrenders ; that, for honour's sake, words oppose our wishes, and that such refusals promise everything. This is, no doubt, making a somewhat plain confession to you, and showing little regard for our modesty. But, since these words have at last escaped me, would I have been so anxious to restrain Damis, would I, pray, have so complacently listened, for such a long time, to the offer of your heart, would I have taken the matter as I have done, if the offer of that heart had had nothing in it to please me ? And, when I myself would have compelled you to refuse the match that had just been proposed, what ought this entreaty to have given you to understand, but the interest I was disposed to take in you, and the vexation it would have caused me, that this marriage would have at least divided a heart that I wished all to myself?⁶⁰

⁵⁹ In the original French, there is a delicacy which can hardly be rendered into English. Elmire almost always avoids the use of a personal pronoun, but employs the indefinite *on*, during the whole of this scene. This may be grammatically wrong, but is, dramatically, eminently successful. We give, as an example, the following four lines in the original :

“ Quelque raison qu'on trouve à l'amour qui nous dompte,
On trouve à l'avouer toujours un peu de honte.
On s'en défend d'abord : mais de l'air qu'on s'y prend
On fait connaître assez que notre cœur se rend.”

⁶⁰ Here, again, there is a delicacy in the original French which cannot be rendered into English. Elmire is full of hesitation in what she is going to say, and she expresses this even in her grammar, which, although far from clear, beautifully reflects the trouble of her mind. We give the four last lines of her speech, crowded with *que*. I agree with Sainte-Beuve that Molière placed them there purposely.

TAR. It is very sweet, no doubt, Madam, to hear these words from the lips we love; their honey plentifully diffuses a suavity throughout my senses, such as they never yet tasted. The happiness of pleasing you is my highest study, and my heart reposes all its bliss in your affection; but, by your leave, this heart presumes still to have some doubt in its own felicity. I may look upon these words as a decent stratagem to compel me to break off the match that is on the point of being concluded; and, if I must needs speak candidly to you, I shall not trust to such tender words, until some of those favours, for which I sigh, have assured me of all which they intend to express, and fixed in my heart a firm belief of the charming kindness which you intend for me.

ELM. (*After having coughed to warn her husband*). What! would you proceed so fast, and exhaust the tenderness of one's heart at once? One takes the greatest pains to make you the sweetest declarations; meanwhile is not that enough for you? and will nothing content you, but pushing things to the utmost extremity?

TAR. The less a blessing is deserved, the less one presumes to expect it. Our love dares hardly rely upon words. A lot full of happiness is difficult to realize, and we wish to enjoy it before believing in it. As for me, who think myself so little deserving of your favours, I doubt the success of my boldness; and shall believe nothing, Madam, until you have convinced my passion by real proofs.

ELM. Good Heavens! how very tyrannically your love acts! And into what a strange confusion it throws me! What a fierce sway it exercises over our hearts! and how violently it clamours for what it desires! What! can I find no shelter from your pursuit? and will you scarcely give me time to breathe? Is it decent to be so very exacting, and to insist upon your demands being satisfied immediately; and thus, by your pressing efforts, to take advantage of the weakness which you see one has for you?

“Qu'est-ce que cette instance a dû vous faire entendre,
Que l'intérêt qu'en vous on s'avise de prendre,
Et l'ennui qu'on aurait que ce noeud qu'on résout
Vint partager du moins un cœur que l'on veut tout?”

TAR. But if you look upon my addresses with a favourable eye, why refuse me convincing proofs?

ELM. But how can I comply with what you wish, without offending that Heaven of which you are always speaking?

TAR. If it be nothing but Heaven that opposes itself to my wishes, it is a trifle for me to remove such an obstacle; and that need be no restraint upon your love.

ELM. But they frighten us so much with the judgments of Heaven!

TAR. I can dispel these ridiculous fears for you, Madam, and I possess the art of allaying scruples. Heaven, it is true, forbids certain gratifications, but there are ways and means of compounding such matters.⁶¹ According to our different wants, there is a science which loosens that which binds our conscience, and which rectifies the evil of the act with the purity of our intentions.⁶² We shall be able to initiate you into these secrets, Madam; you have only to be led by me. Satisfy my desires, and have no fear; I shall be answerable for everything, and shall take the sin upon myself. (*Elmire coughs louder*). You cough very much, Madam?

ELM. Yes, I am much tormented.

TAR. Would you like a piece of this liquorice?

ELM. It is an obstinate cold, no doubt; and I know that all the liquorice in the world will do it no good.

TAR. That, certainly, is very sad

ELM. Yes, more than I can say.

TAR. In short, your scruples, Madam, are easily overcome. You may be sure of the secret being kept, and there is no harm done unless the thing is bruited about. The scandal which it causes constitutes the offence, and sinning in secret is no sinning at all.

⁶¹ In the original edition there is a note saying, "It is a scoundrel who speaks."

⁶² Pascal uses nearly the same words in the seventh *Provinciale*: "When we cannot prevent the action, we purify at least the intention; and thus we correct vice by means of the purity of the end." The Jansenists considered for some time the *Tartuffe* as a sequel to Pascal's Letters. Machiavelli, in the *Mandragore*, makes Friar Timotheo use the same arguments in order to persuade a married woman to procure an heir to her husband.

ELM. (*After having coughed once more*). In short, I see that I must make up my mind to yield; that I must consent to grant you everything; and that with less than that, I ought not to pretend to satisfy you, or to be believed (?). It is no doubt very hard to go to that length, and it is greatly in spite of myself that I venture thus far; but, since people persist in driving me to this; since they will not credit aught I may say, and wish for more convincing proofs, I can but resolve to act thus, and satisfy them.⁶³ If this gratification offends, so much the worse for those who force me to it; the fault ought surely not to be mine.

TAR. Yes, Madam, I take it upon myself; and the thing in itself . . .

ELM. Open this door a little, and, see, pray, if my husband be not in that gallery.

TAR. What need is there to take so much thought about him? Between ourselves, he is easily led by the nose. He is likely to glory in all our interviews, and I have brought him so far that he will see everything, and without believing anything.

ELM. It matters not. Go, pray, for a moment and look carefully everywhere outside.

SCENE VI.—ORGON, ELMIRE.

ORG. (*Coming from under the table*). This is, I admit to you, an abominable wretch! I cannot recover myself, and all this perfectly stuns me.

ELM. What, you come out so soon! You are surely jesting. Get under the table-cloth again; it is not time yet. Stay to the end, to be quite sure of the thing, and do not trust at all to mere conjectures.

ORG. No, nothing more wicked ever came out of hell.

⁶³ See page 438, note 59. Elmire, of course, uses *on* here to designate Orgon, though Tartuffe takes it for himself. If she had not used this indefinite pronoun from the very beginning, the hypocrite's suspicions might have been roused. We give the four last lines in the original:

“ Mais, puisque l'on s'obstine à m'y vouloir réduire,
Puisqu'on ne veut point croire à tout ce qu'on peut dire,
Et qu'on veut des témoins qui soient plus convaincants,
Il faut bien s'y résoudre, et contenter les gens.”

ELM. Good Heavens! you ought not to believe things so lightly. Be fully convinced before you give in; and do not hurry for fear of being mistaken.⁶⁴ (*Elmire pushes Orgon behind her*).

SCENE VII.—TARTUFFE, ELMIRE, ORGON.

TAR. (*Without seeing Orgon*). Everything conspires, Madam, to my satisfaction. I have surveyed the whole apartment; there is no one there; and my delighted soul. . . (*At the moment that Tartuffe advances with open arms to embrace Elmire, she draws back, and Tartuffe perceives Orgon*).

ORG. (*Stopping Tartuffe*). Gently! you are too eager in your amorous transports, and you ought not to be so impetuous. Ha! ha! good man, you wished to victimize me! How you are led away by temptations! You would marry my daughter, and covet my wife! I have been a long while in doubt whether you were in earnest, and I always expected you would change your tone; but this is pushing the proof far enough: I am satisfied, and wish for no more.

ELM. (*To Tartuffe*). It is much against my inclinations that I have done this: but I have been driven to the necessity of treating you thus.

TAR. (*To Orgon*). What! do you believe. . .

ORG. Come, pray, no more. Decamp, and without ceremony.

TAR. My design⁶⁵. . .

ORG. These speeches are no longer of any use; you must get out of this house, and forthwith.

TAR. It is for you to get out, you who assume the mastership: the house belongs to me, I will make you know it, and show you plainly enough that it is useless to resort to these cowardly tricks to pick a quarrel with

⁶⁴ Elmire does not joke with Orgon, but is really angry that she has been obliged to do violence to her innate modesty, in order to convince him.

⁶⁵ Tartuffe, no doubt, was going to say, "My design was to put to the proof the virtue of your wife." The often-mentioned *Lettre sur l'impos- teur* says that Tartuffe here calls Orgon his brother, and begins to justify himself. Molière most probably modified this passage.

me; that one cannot safely, as one thinks, insult me; that I have the means of confounding and of punishing imposture, of avenging offended Heaven, and of making those repent who talk of turning me out hence.

SCENE VIII.—ELMIRE, ORGON.

ELM. What language is this? and what does he mean?

ORG. I am, in truth, all confusion, and this is no laughing matter.

ELM. How so?

ORG. I perceive my mistake by what he says; and the deed of gift troubles my mind.

ELM. The deed of gift?

ORG. Yes. The thing is done. But something else disturbs me too.

ELM. And what?

ORG. You shall know all. But first let us go and see if a certain box is still upstairs.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—ORGON, CLÉANTE.

CLE. Where would you run to?

ORG. Indeed! how can I tell?

CLE. It seems to me that we should begin by consulting together what had best be done in this emergency.

ORG. This box troubles me sorely. It makes me despair more than all the rest.

CLE. This box then contains an important secret?

ORG. It is a deposit that Argas himself, the friend whom I pity, entrusted secretly to my own hands. He selected me for this in his flight; and from what he told me, it contains documents upon which his life and fortune depend.

CLE. Why then did you confide it into other hands?

ORG. It was from a conscientious motive. I straightway confided the secret to the wretch; and his arguing persuaded me to give this box into his keeping, so that, in case of any inquiry, I might be able to deny it by a ready

subterfuge, by which my conscience might have full absolution for swearing against the truth.⁶⁶

CLE. This is critical, at least, to judge from appearances; and the deed of gift, and his confidence, have been, to tell you my mind, steps too inconsiderately taken. You may be driven far with such pledges; and since the fellow has these advantages over you, it is a great imprudence on your part to drive him to extremities; and you ought to seek some gentler method.

ORG. What! to hide such a double-dealing heart, so wicked a soul, under so fair an appearance of touching fervour! And I who received him in my house a beggar and penniless. . . . It is all over; I renounce all pious people. Henceforth I shall hold them in utter abhorrence, and be worse to them than the very devil.

CLE. Just so! you exaggerate again! You never preserve moderation in anything. You never keep within reason's bounds; and always rush from one extreme to another. You see your mistake, and find out that you have been imposed upon by a pretended zeal. But is there any reason why, in order to correct yourself, you should fall into a greater error still, and say that all pious people have the same feelings as that perfidious rascal? What! because a scoundrel has audaciously deceived you, under the pompous show of outward austerity, you will needs have it that every one is like him, and that there is no really pious man to be found now-a-days? Leave those foolish deductions to free-thinkers: distinguish between real virtue and its counterfeit; never bestow your esteem too hastily, and keep in this the necessary middle course. Beware, if possible, of honouring imposture; but do not attack true piety also; and if you must fall into an extreme, rather offend again on the other side.

SCENE II.—ORGON, CLÉANTE, DAMIS.

DAM. What! father, is it true that this scoundrel threatens you? that he forgets all that you have done for him,

⁶⁶ Tartuffe has taught Orgon the doctrine of "mental reservation," just as he wished to teach Elmire that of "purity of intention." Pascal attacks those casuistical subtleties in the ninth *Provinciale*.

and that his cowardly and too contemptible pride turns your kindness for him against yourself?

ORG. Even so, my son ; and it causes me unutterable grief.

DAM. Leave him to me, I will slice his ears off. Such insolence must not be tolerated : it is my duty to deliver you from him at once ; and, to put an end to this matter, I must knock him down.

CLE. Spoken just like a regular youth. Moderate, if you please, these violent transports. We live under a government, and in an age, in which violence only makes matters worse.

SCENE III.—MADAME PERNELLE, ORGON, ELMIRE, CLÉ-ANTE, MARIANE, DAMIS, DORINE.

MAD. P. What is all this ? What dreadful things do I hear !

ORG. Some novelties which my own eyes have witnessed, and you see how I am repaid for my kindness. I affectionately harbour a fellow creature in his misery, I shelter him and treat him as my own brother ; I heap favours upon him every day ; I give him my daughter, and everything I possess : and, at that very moment, the perfidious, infamous wretch forms the wicked design of seducing my wife ; and, not content even with these vile attempts, he dares to threaten me with my own favours ; and, to encompass my ruin, wishes to take advantage of my indiscreet good nature, drive me from my property which I have transferred to him, and reduce me to that condition from which I rescued him !

DOR. Poor fellow !

MAD. P. I can never believe, my son, that he would commit so black a deed.

ORG. What do you mean ?

MAD. P. Good people are always envied.

ORG. What do you mean by all this talk, mother ?

MAD. P. That there are strange goings-on in your house, and that we know but too well the hatred they bear him.

ORG. What has this hatred to do with what I have told you ?

MAD. P. I have told you a hundred times, when a boy,

“That virtue here is persecuted ever ;
That envious men may die, but envy never.”

ORG. But in what way does this bear upon to-day’s doings ?

MAD. P. They may have concocted a hundred idle stories against him.

ORG. I have already told you that I have seen everything myself.

MAD. P. The malice of slanderers is very great.

ORG. You will make me swear, mother. I tell you that with my own eyes I have witnessed this daring crime.

MAD. P. Evil tongues have always venom to scatter abroad, and nothing here below can guard against it.

ORG. That is a very senseless remark. I have seen it, I say, seen with my own eyes, seen, what you call seen. Am I to din it a hundred times in your ears, and shout like four people ?

MAD. P. Goodness me ! appearances most frequently deceive : you must not always judge by what you see.

ORG. I am boiling with rage !

MAD. P. Human nature is liable to false suspicions, and good is often construed into evil.

ORG. I must construe the desire to embrace my wife into a charitable design !

MAD. P. It is necessary to have good reasons for accusing people ; and you ought to have waited until you were quite certain of the thing.

ORG. How the deuce could I be more certain ? Ought I to have waited, mother, until to my very eyes, he had . . . You will make me say some foolish thing.

MAD. P. In short, his soul is too full of pure zeal ; and I cannot at all conceive that he would have attempted the things laid to his charge.

ORG. Go, my passion is so great that, if you were not my mother, I do not know what I might say to you.

DOR. (*To Orgon*). A just reward of things here below, Sir ; you would not believe anyone, and now they will not believe you.

CLE. We are wasting in mere trifling, the time that

should be employed in devising some measures We must not remain inactive when a knave threatens.

DAM. What! would his effrontery go to that extent?

ELM. As for me, I hardly think it possible, and his ingratitude here shows itself too plainly.

CLE. (*To Orgon*). Do not trust to that; he will find some means to justify his doings against you; and for less than this, a powerful party⁶⁷ has involved people in a vexatious maze. I tell you once more, that, armed with what he has, you should never have pushed him thus far.

ORG. True enough; but what could I do? I was unable to master my resentment at the presumption of the wretch.

CLE. I wish, with all my heart, that we could patch up even a shadow of peace between you two.

ELM. Had I but known how he was armed against us, I would have avoided bringing things to such a crisis; and my . . .

ORG. (*To Dorine, seeing M. Loyal come in*). What does this man want? Go and see quickly. I am in a fine state for people to come to see me!

SCENE IV.—ORGON, MADAME PERNELLE, ELMIRE, MARIANE, CLÉANTE, DAMIS, DORINE, MR. LOYAL.

M. LOY. (*To Dorine at the farther part of the stage*). Good morning, dear sister;⁶⁸ pray, let me speak to your master.

DOR. He is engaged; and I doubt whether he can see anyone at present.

M. LOY. I do not intend to be intrusive in his own house. I believe that my visit will have nothing to displease him. I have come upon a matter of which he will be very glad.

DOR. Your name?

M. LOY. Only tell him that I am come from Monsieur Tartuffe, for his good.

⁶⁷ The originale has *cabale*. See Vol. II., page 129, note 28.

⁶⁸ M. Loyal, in employing the words "dear sister," shows at once that he is worthy of being employed by Tartuffe.

DOR. (*To Orgon*). This is a man who comes, in a gentle way, from Monsieur Tartuffe, upon some business, of which he says, you will be very glad.

CLE. (*To Orgon*). You must see who this man is, and what he wants.

ORG. (*To Cléante*). Perhaps he comes to reconcile us: How shall I receive him?

CLE. You must not allow your anger to get the upper hand, and if he speaks of an arrangement, you should listen to him.

M. LOY. (*To Orgon*). Your servant, Sir! May Heaven punish those who would harm you, and may it favour you as much as I wish!

ORG. (*Softly to Cléante*). This mild beginning confirms my opinion, and augurs already some reconciliation.

M. LOY. Your whole family has always been dear to me, and I served your father.

ORG. I am ashamed, Sir, and crave your pardon for not knowing you or your name.

M. LOY. My name is Loyal, a native of Normandy,⁶⁹ and I am a tipstaff to the court in spite of envy.⁷⁰ For the last forty years, I have had the happiness, thanking Heaven, of exercising the functions thereof with much honour; and I have come, with your leave, Sir, to serve you with a writ of a certain decree . . .

ORG. What! you are here . . .

M. LOY. Let us proceed without anger, Sir. It is nothing but a summons; a notice to quit this house, you and yours, to remove your chattels, and to make room for others, without delay or remissness, as required hereby.

ORG. I! leave this house!

M. LOY. Yes, Sir, if you please. The house at present, as you well know, belongs incontestably to good Monsieur Tartuffe. Of all your property, he is henceforth lord and master, by virtue of a contract of which I am the

⁶⁹ The Normans had the reputation of being very cautious (*avisé*)—the Scotch express it by pawky—and also of being very fond of going to law; hence the allusion. The original has *huissier à verge*.

⁷⁰ See page 393, note 24.

bearer. It is in due form, and nothing can be said against it.

DAM. (*To M. Loyal*). Certainly this impudence is immense, and I admire it!

M. LOY. (*To Damis*). Sir, my business lies not with you; (*Pointing to Orgon*), it is with this gentleman. He is both reasonable and mild, and knows too well the duty of an honest man to oppose the law in any way.

ORG. But . . .

M. LOY. Yes, Sir, I know that you would not rebel for a million of money, and that, like a gentleman, you will allow me to execute here the orders which I have received.

DAM. Mr. Tipstaff, you may chance to get your black gown well dusted here.

M. LOY. (*To Orgon*). Order your son to hold his tongue or to retire, Sir. I should be very loth to have recourse to writing, and to see your name figure in my official report.

DOR. (*Aside*). This Mr. Loyal has a very disloyal air.

M. LOY. Having a great deal of sympathy with all honest people, I charged myself with these documents, Sir, as much to oblige and please you, as to avoid the choice of those who, not having the same consideration for you that inspires me, might have proceeded in a less gentle way.

ORG. And what can be worse than to order people to quit their own house?

M. LOY. You are allowed time, and I shall suspend until to-morrow the execution of the writ, Sir. I shall come only to pass the night here with ten of my people without noise or without scandal. For form's sake, you must, if you please, before going to bed, bring me the keys of your door. I shall take care not to disturb your rest, and to permit nothing which is not right. But to-morrow, you must be ready in the morning, to clear the house of even the smallest utensil; my people shall assist you, and I have selected strong ones, so that they can help you to remove everything. One cannot act better than I do, I think; and as I am treating you with great indulgence, I entreat you also, Sir, to profit by it, so that I may not be annoyed in the execution of my duty.

ORG. (*Aside*). I would willingly give just now the best hundred gold pieces of what remains to me for the pleasure of striking on this snout the soundest blow that ever was dealt.

CLE. (*Softly to Orgon*). Leave well alone. Do not let us make things worse.

DAM. I can hardly restrain myself at this strange impertinence, and my fingers are itching.

DOR. Upon my word, Mr. Loyal, with such a broad back, a few cudgel blows would do you no harm.

M. LOY. We might easily punish these infamous words, sweetheart ; and there is a law against women too.

CLE. (*To Monsieur Loyal*). Pray, let us put an end to all this, Sir. Hand over this paper quickly, and leave us.

M. LOY. Till by-and-by. May Heaven bless you all !

ORG. And may it confound you, and him who sends you ?

SCENE V.—ORGON, MADAME PERNELLE, ELMIRE,
CLEANTÉ, MARIANE, DAMIS, DORINE.

ORG. Well ! mother, do you see now whether I am right ; and you may judge of the rest from the writ. Do you at last perceive his treacheries ?

MAD. P. I stand aghast, and feel as if dropped from the clouds !

DOR. (*To Orgon*). You are wrong to complain, you are wrong to blame him, and his pious designs are confirmed by this. His virtue is perfected in the love for his neighbour. He knows that worldly goods often corrupt people, and he wishes, from pure charity, to take everything away from you which might become an obstacle to your salvation.

ORG. Hold your tongue. I must always be saying that to you.

CLE. (*To Orgon*). Let us consult what had best be done.

ELM. Go and expose the audacity of the ungrateful wretch. This proceeding destroys the validity of the contract ; and his treachery will appear too black to allow him to meet with the success which we surmise.

SCENE VI.—VALÈRE, ORGON, MADAME PERNELLE,
ELMIRE, CLÉANTE, MARIANE, DAMIS, DORINE.

VAL. It is with great regret, Sir, that I come to afflict you ; but I see myself compelled to it by pressing danger. A most intimate and faithful friend, who knows the interest which I take in you, has, for my sake, by a most hazardous step, violated the secrecy due to the affairs of the State, and has just sent me an intimation, in consequence of which you will be obliged to flee immediately. The scoundrel who has long imposed upon you has an hour since accused you to the King, and amongst other charges which he brings against you, has lodged in his hands important documents of a state-criminal, of which, he says, contrary to the duty of a subject, you have kept the guilty secret. I am ignorant of the details of the crime laid to your charge ; but a warrant is out against you ; and the better to execute it, he himself is to accompany the person who is to arrest you.

CLE. These are his armed rights ; and by this the traitor seeks to make himself master of your property.

ORG. The man is, I own to you, a wicked brute !

VAL. The least delay may be fatal to you. I have my coach at the door to carry you off, with a thousand louis which I bring you. Let us lose no time ; the blow is terrible, and is one of those which are best parried by flight. I offer myself to conduct you to a place of safety, and will accompany you to the end of your flight.

ORG. Alas, what do I not owe to your obliging cares ! I must await another opportunity to thank you ; and I implore Heaven to be propitious enough to enable me one day to acknowledge this generous service. Farewell : be careful, the rest of you . . .

CLE. Go quickly. We will endeavour, brother, to do what is necessary.

SCENE VII.—TARTUFFE, A POLICE OFFICER, MADAME PERNELLE, ORGON, ELMIRE, CLÉANTE, MARIANE, VALÈRE, DAMIS, DORINE.

TAR. (*Stopping Orgon*). Gently, Sir, gently, do not run so fast. You will not have to go far to find a lodging ; we take you a prisoner in the King's name.

ORG. Wretch! you have reserved this blow for the last: this is the stroke, villain, by which you dispatch me; and which crowns all your perfidies.

TAR. Your abuse cannot incense me; Heaven has taught me to suffer everything.

CLE. Your moderation is great, I confess.

DAM. How impudently the villain sports with Heaven!

TAR. All your outrages cannot move me in the least; and I think of nothing but my duty.

MAR. You may glorify yourself very much upon this; and this task is very honourable for you to undertake.

TAR. A task cannot but be glorious when it proceeds from the power that sends me hither.

ORG. But do you remember, ungrateful wretch; that my charitable hand raised you from a miserable condition?

TAR. Yes, I know what help I received from you; but the King's interest is my first duty. The just obligation of this sacred duty stifles all gratitude of my heart; and to such a powerful consideration, I would sacrifice friend, wife, kindred, and myself with them.

ELM. The hypocrite!

DOR. How artfully he makes himself a lovely cloak of all that is sacred.

CLE. But if this zeal, which guides you, and upon which you plume yourself so much, be so perfect as you say, why has it not shown itself until Orgon caught you trying to seduce his wife; and why did you not think of denouncing him until his honour obliged him to drive you from his house? I do not say that the gift of all his property, which he has made over to you, ought to have turned you from your duty; but why, wishing to treat him as a criminal to-day, did you consent to take aught from him?

TAR. (*To the Officer*). Pray, Sir, deliver me from this clamour, and be good enough to execute your orders.

OFFI. Yes, we have no doubt, delayed too long to discharge them; your words remind me of this just in time; and to execute them, follow me directly to the prison which is destined for your abode.⁷¹

⁷¹ This is a just counterpart of the *deus ex machina* of Tartuffe, when

TAR. Who? I Sir?

OFFI. Yes, you.

TAR. Why to prison?

OFFI. I have no account to give to you (*To Orgon*). Compose yourself, Sir, after so great an alarm. We live under a monarch, an enemy of fraud, a monarch whose eyes penetrate into the heart, and whom all the art of impostors cannot deceive. Blessed with great discernment, his lofty soul looks clearly at things; it is never betrayed by exaggeration, and his sound reason falls into no excess. He bestows lasting glory on men of worth; but he shows this zeal without blindness, and his love for sincerity does not close his heart to the horror which falsehood must inspire.⁷² Even this person could not hoodwink him, and he has guarded himself against more artful snares. He soon perceived, by his subtle penetration, all the vileness concealed in his inmost heart. In coming to accuse you, he has betrayed himself, and, by a just stroke of supreme justice, discovered himself to the King as a notorious rogue, against whom information had been laid under another name. His life is a long series of wicked actions, of which whole volumes might be written. Our monarch, in short, has detested his vile ingratitude and disloyalty towards you; has joined this affair to his other misdeeds, and has placed me under his orders, only to see his impertinence carried out to the end, and to make him by himself give you satisfaction for everything. Yes, he wishes me to strip the wretch of all your documents which he professes to possess, and to give them into your hands. By his sovereign power he annuls the obligations of the contract which gave him all your property, and lastly, pardons you this secret offence, in which the flight of a friend has involved you; and it is the reward of your former zeal in upholding his rights, to show that he knows how to recompense a good action when least thought of;

he says, in the seventh scene of the fourth act, to Orgon, "It is for you to get out, you who assume the mastership: the house belongs to me, I will make you know it."

⁷² This praise was not wholly undeserved in 1669; although there seems to me rather too much of it. When *Tartuffe* was played during the first French Revolution, these lines were altered to suit the times, and, of course, the praise of the King was omitted.

that merit never loses aught with him; and that he remembers good much better than evil.⁷³

DOR. Heaven be praised!

MAD. P. I breathe again.

ELM. Favourable success!

MAR. Who dared foretell this?

ORG. (*To Tartuffe, whom the officer leads off*). Well, wretch, there you are . . .

SCENE VIII.—MADAME PERNELLE, ORGON, ELMIRE, MARIANE, CLÉANTE, VALÈRE, DAMIS, DORINE.

CLE. Ah! brother, stop; and do not descend to indignities. Leave the wretch to his fate, and do not add to the remorse that overwhelms him. Rather wish that his heart, from this day, may be converted to virtue; that he may reform his life, in detesting his vice, and soften the justice of our great prince; while you throw yourself at his knees to render thanks for his goodness, which has treated you so leniently.

ORG. Yes, it is well said. Let us throw ourselves joyfully at his feet, to laud the kindness which his heart displays to us. Then, having acquitted ourselves of this first duty, we must apply ourselves to the just cares of another, and by a sweet union crown in Valère the flame of a generous and sincere lover.

⁷³ The analysis of the officer's speech given in the so-often-quoted *Lettre sur l'Imposteur* proves that it was different from what it now is. In speaking of Louis XIV., he says that "the prince had seen into the heart of the wretch, by an intuition, which monarchs possess above all other men, that calumny is abashed by his mere presence," and that he dislikes hypocrisy as much as it has influence over his subjects. All these remarks are not to be found in the officer's speech as we now possess it.

AMPHITRYON.
COMÉDIE.

AMPHITRYON.
A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS.
(*THE ORIGINAL IN VERSE.*)

13TH JANUARY 1668.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

THE history of Amphitryon and Alcmena, or rather the myth of the birth of Hercules, is certainly very old, and is to be found in the literature of different nations. The Indians, the Greeks, and the Romans were acquainted with it; and it exists also among the legendary tales of the Middle Ages, but always modified according to the several nationalities where we meet with it, and has sometimes a tragical, sometimes a jocular or ironical, ending.

Voltaire, in his *Historical Fragments about India*, in the twenty-eighth article on *The Terrestrial Paradise of the Indians*, relates how the story of Amphitryon is found amongst the oldest fables of the Brahmins. A certain Brahmin having quarrelled with his wife, gave her a beating and left her; an Indian divinity of an inferior rank adopted the appearance of the Brahmin, made his peace with her, and lived for some time with her, until the real husband, who repented of his former behaviour, came back again. But the man in possession declared that the other was an impostor, and at last the affair was brought before the Synod of Benares, who ordered an ordeal, which cannot be related, but in which finally the evil-minded divinity betrayed himself, and the lawful husband was reinstated in the matrimonial abode.¹

Euripides, Epicharmus, and Archippos have also handled this subject, and produced it on the Greek stage; but their plays are lost. Plautus, the father of Roman comedy, has written an *Amphitruo*, which he himself calls in the prologue "Tragico-Comœdia." As Molière owes a great deal of his comedy to his Latin prototype, we cannot do better than give Sir Walter Scott's Introduction to Dryden's remodelling of *Amphitryon*:—"Plautus, the venerable father of Roman comedy, who flourished during the second Punic war, left us a play on the subject of Amphitryon, which has had the honour to be deemed worthy of imitation by Molière and Dryden. It cannot be expected that the plain, blunt, and inartificial style of so rude an age should bear any comparison with that of the authors who enjoyed the highest advantages of the polished times to which they were an ornament. But the merit of having devised and embodied most of the comic distresses, which have excited laughter throughout so

¹ Moland and several other commentators of Molière say that Voltaire found this Indian legend in Colonel Dow's book. I have looked in Voltaire; but he does not say so, nor can I find it in Dow's *Inaijat Allah*,—tales translated from the Persian, nor in his *History of Hindostan*.

so many ages, is to be attributed to the ancient bard upon whose original conception of the plot his successors have made few and inconsiderable improvements. It is true that, instead of a formal Prologue who stepped forth in the character of Mercury and gravely detailed to the audience the plot of the play, Molière and Dryden have introduced it in the modern, more artificial method, by the dialogue of the actors in the first scene. It is true, also, that with great contempt of one of the unities, afterwards deemed so indispensable by the ancients, Plautus introduces the birth of Hercules into a play, founded upon the intrigue which occasioned the event. Yet with all these disadvantages, and that rude flatness of his dialogue,—resting frequently, for wit, upon the most miserable puns,—the comic device of the two Sosias, the errors into which the malice of Mercury plunges his unlucky original, the quarrel of Alcmena with her real husband, and her reconciliation with Jupiter in his stead, the final confronting of the two Amphitryons, and the astonishment of the unfortunate general at finding every proof of his identity exhibited by his rival, are all, however rudely sketched, the inventions of the Roman poet. In one respect it would seem that the *jeu de théâtre* necessary to render the piece probable upon the stage, was better managed in the time of Plautus than in that of Dryden and Molière. Upon a modern stage it is evidently difficult to introduce two pairs of characters so extremely alike as to make it at all probable, or even possible, that the mistakes, depending upon their extreme resemblance, could take place. But, favoured by the masks and costume of the ancient theatre, Plautus contrived to render Jupiter and Mercury so exactly like Amphitryon and Sosia, that they were obliged to retain certain marks, supposed to be invisible to the other persons of the drama, by which the audience themselves might be enabled to distinguish the gods from the mortals whose forms they had assumed."

The history of Amphitryon, strangely disguised, is also found in the long series of the romances of the *San-Graal* and of the *Round Table*, and refers to the birth of King Arthur, and not to that of Hercules. In the following manner Robert of Gloucester tells the tale, after Geoffry of Monmouth and Wace:—

"At the fest of Estre the kyng (Uther Pendragon) sende ys sonde,
That heo comen alle to London the hey men of this lond . . .
Alle the noble men of this lond to the noble fest come,
And heore wyves and heore dogtren with hem mony nome,
This fest was noble ynow, and nobliche y do;
For mony was the faire ledy, that y come was therto.
Ygerne, Gorloys wyf, was fairest of echon,
That was contasse of Cornewail, for so fair nas ther non.
The kyng by huld hire faste y now, and ys herte on hired caste,
And thogte, thay heo were wyf, to do folye atte laste."

But she refused to listen to him, and told all to her husband, who, full of anger and "with oute leve of the kyng," went back to his own country. Then Gorloys placed his wife and some of his troops in a very strong fortress, Tintagell, and went himself with a division of his retainers into another fortress of Cornwall. Uther soon made his appearance, and "the castel, that the erl inne was, the king by segede faste." But Ygerne was never out of his thoughts, and "the castel ys so strong that the lady ys inne," that he gave himself up to the greatest despair. Merlyn, who "was sory ynow for the kyng's folye," was sent for, and by his magic art he gave to Uther the appearance of Gorloys, while he himself, and Ulfyn, the king's confidant, assumed the outward looks of two of the earl of

Cornwall's "men," Brithoel and Jordan. Thus changed, they appear before the castle, where the countess was, and the porter, seeing his lord and his friends, let them in, "The contas was glad y now, tho hire lord to hire com, and eyther other in here armes myd gret joye nom." In the meantime the king's men took the castle where the earl was, Gorloys was slain, and these tidings were brought to Ygerne. The pretended earl told her, however, that he had left his own castle secretly, "that none of myne men yt nuste," and that he was going back to "the kynge, and make my pays with him." He went away and "come toward ys men ys own forme he nom." Afterwards king Uther married the noble and widowed countess, but on that night, when he appeared as Gorloys,

"Bi gete was the beste body, that ever was in this londe,
Kynge Arthure the noble mon, that ever worthe understonde."

There is a great difference between the Celtic and classical tradition. Ygerne is not wholly unlike Alcmena; but the comical element is totally wanting in the first, whilst Arthur and Merlin, although peculiar in their notions of love and morality, are staid and mysterious personages.

Plautus' *Amphitryon* was acted in Latin, in Italy, in the fifteenth century, and in 1560, Lodovico Dolce brought out an imitation of it, under the title of *Il Marito*. But two earlier translations of this play already existed in Spanish; one in prose, done by Francisco de Villalobos, physician to Charles the Fifth, which was published in 1515, and another by Fernando Perez de Oliva, principal of the university of Salamanca. Camoens, the poet of the *Lusiad*, produced a piece in imitation of Plautus' comedy, which, according to de Sismondi's *Historical view of the Literature of the South of Europe*, "is executed with considerable wit and spirit." In 1638, Jean de Rotrou published an imitation of the Latin comedy, in French, which he called *The Two Sosias*, and in 1650, only a short time before his death, he remodelled his piece, for the theatre du Marais, as *une grande pièce à machines*, which bore the title of *The birth of Hercules*. In 1653 there was represented at the court the grand *Ballet of Night*, arranged by Benserade, with machinery by Torelli. The sixth *entrée* of the second *veille*, is occupied by a pantomime (*comédie muette*), which is chiefly based on Plautus' plot.

Fifteen years after this pantomime, Molière fixed upon the same subject, and wrote his *Amphitryon*, one of the most charming and natural comedies composed in French verse. But his husband is not the Roman spouse, who is rather proud of having a god for *collaborateur*, nor does his Jupiter, who threatens to kill himself before Alcmena's eyes, give a very correct idea of the classical "father of gods and men." But, on the other hand, his Cleanthis is a happy creation, and the model of a "nagging" but virtuous woman, so fond of using her tongue, that even Mercury, although a god under the disguise of her husband, rather avoids responding to her uxorious advances, and thereby causes an increase of the wrath of the shrew. This greatly enhances the comic interest of the play, and forms an amusing contrast to the display of conjugal tenderness between Jupiter, the pretended Amphitryon, and the newly-married Alcmena. Sprightliness and vivacity abound in this comedy, which are enhanced by the short and long verses, used whenever suitable, and the alternate rhymes, in which it is written.

It has been said that Molière, in producing his *Amphitryon*, wished to flatter the nascent passion of Louis XIV. for Madame de Montespan, but

this accusation seems to me absolutely without foundation. This play was represented on the 13th of January, 1668; and it was only some months later that this high-born lady became the recognized mistress of the King, who would not have permitted any allusions to be made to his amours. Moreover, *Amphitryon* was not represented at Court, but at the theatre of the Palais Royal, so that the allusions—if any existed—must have appeared to the Parisian public, at all times inclined to be satirical, as far from complimentary. In any case the comedy was very successful, and was represented twenty-nine consecutive times.

Amphitryon was dedicated to the Prince de Condé in the following words:—

My Lord,
Under favor of the Wits, I know nothing more impertinent than Dedications; and Your most serene Highness will give me leave not to follow here the style of those gentlemen, and to omit using two or three miserable thoughts, which have been turned and returned so often, that they are worn threadbare. The name of the Great Condé is too glorious a name to be treated like other names. That illustrious name must be applied to no uses unworthy of it; and were I to say fine things, I would rather talk of putting it at the head of an army, than at the head of a book; and I should much better conceive what it is able to do, by opposing it to the forces of the enemies of the state, than by opposing it to the criticism of the enemies of a Play.

Not but that your serene highness' approbation is a powerful protection for all these kind of works, and that people are persuaded of your knowledge, as well as of your intrepid courage and your greatness of soul. It is known throughout the whole world, that your merit is not circumscribed by the bounds of that unconquerable valour which gains adorers even amongst those whom it vanquishes; that that merit extends even to the nicest and sublimest sciences; and that your decisions concerning intellectual works never fail to be assented to even by the most fastidious. But it is likewise known, my Lord, that all those glorious approbations which we boast of to the public cost us nothing to print, and that they are things which we dispose of at pleasure. It is known, I say, that an epistle dedicatory says what it pleases, and that an author has it in his power to lay hold of the most august persons, and to adorn the first leaves of his book with their great names; that he has the liberty herein to give himself the honour of their esteem as much as he will, and to make to himself protectors who never had the least thoughts of being so.

I shall neither abuse your name nor your goodness, my Lord, to oppugn the critics of *Amphitryon*, and to assume a glory which perhaps I have not deserved; and I take the liberty of offering you my play, only to have the opportunity of letting you know that I incessantly regard you with profound veneration, the great qualities which you join to the august blood from which you descend, and that I am, my Lord, with all possible respect and imaginable zeal, your most serene Highness' very humble, very obedient, and very obliging servant,

MOLIÈRE.

In the seventh volume of the translated Select Comedies of M. de Molière, London, 1732, this play is dedicated to the Right Honourable George Dodington, Esq., in the following words:

SIR:—You are so generally known to be an Encourager of Literature, that every Professor of it, from the highest to the lowest, considers you as his Friend; and grows ambitious of paying his best Respects to one whose Genius, Learning, Politeness, Candour, Benevolence, and Love of the Muses are so eminently remarkable. Give me leave therefore to lay before you a Translation of MOLIÈRE'S *Amphitryon*: the Fruits of my leisure Hours. And as the Rhyme and Measure of the Verses in the *Original* make it difficult to be render'd literally into *English Prose*, be so good as to excuse such Passages as your Judgment cannot approve.

Most Writers would launch out on this occasion, and elaborately draw a Character which, however pleasing it might prove to others, would, I am confident, be disagreeable to you.—But, for my part, I shall only add, that whatsoever Motives

Dedications usually proceed from, the sole Intent of this to assure you and all the World, that I am, with great esteem, SIR,—*Your most Obedient Humble Servant,*
THE TRANSLATOR.

John Dryden, in his *Amphitryon*, performed in 1690, has borrowed both from Plautus and Molière; "But," says Sir Walter Scott, "the wretched taste of the age has induced him to lard the piece with gratuitous indelicacy. He is, in general, coarse and vulgar, where Molière is witty; and where the Frenchman ventures upon a double meaning, the Englishman always contrives to make it a single one. Yet, although inferior to Molière, and accommodated to the gross taste of the seventeenth century, "*Amphitryon*" is one of the happiest effusions of Dryden's comic muse. He enriches the plot by the intrigue of Mercury and Phædra; and the petulant interested "Queen of Gipsies," as her lover terms her, is a bad paramour for the God of Thieves. In the scenes of a higher cast Dryden far outstrips both the French and Roman poets. The sensation to be expressed is not that of sentimental affection, which the good father of Olympus was not capable of feeling; but love of that grosser and subordinate kind, which prompted Jupiter in his intrigues, has been by none of the ancient poets expressed in more beautiful verse than that in which Dryden has clothed it, in the scenes between Jupiter and Alcmena."

Dr. Hawkesworth remodelled and castrated Dryden's *Amphitryon*, in which altered form it was acted at the Theatres Royal, Drury Lane and Covent-Garden. "Dryden's comedy," says the Doctor, "is so tainted with the profaneness and immodesty of the times in which he wrote, that the present time, however selfish and corrupt, has too much regard to external decorum to permit the representation of it upon the stage, without drawing a veil, at least, over some parts of its deformity." It is further stated, in the preface to Dr. Hawkesworth's alteration, "In the scene between Sosia and Mercury, in the second act, *Amphitryon* is supposed to have sent a buckle of diamonds by Sosia as a present to Alcmena; for Sosia first asks Mercury if *Amphitryon did send a certain servant with a present to his wife*; and soon after asks him, "What that present was;" which, by Mercury's answer, appears to be the diamond buckle. Yet in the scene between *Amphitryon* and Alcmena in the third act, when Alcmena asks him, as a proof of having been with her before, from whose hands she had the jewel, he cries out, "This is amazing; have I already given you those diamonds? *the present I reserved*——." And instead of supposing that Sosia had delivered them as part of his errand, which he pretended he could not execute, he appeals to him for their being in safe custody, reserved to be presented by himself. This is an inconsistency peculiar to Dryden, for neither Plautus nor Molière anywhere mention the present to have been sent by Sosia. There is another inaccuracy of the same kind which occurs both in Plautus and Molière. It appears, in the second scene of the second act, that one part of Sosia's errand was to give Alcmena a particular account of the battle; and Sosia's account of his being prevented is so extravagant and absurd that *Amphitryon* cannot believe it; yet, when Alcmena, in the third scene, asks *Amphitryon* how she came to know *what he had sent Sosia to tell her*, *Amphitryon*, in astonishment, seems to admit that she could know these particulars *only from himself*, and does not consider her questions as a proof that Sosia had indeed delivered his message, though, for some reasons, he had pretended the contrary, and forged an incredible story to account for his neglect. As it would have been so much more natural

for Amphitryon to have supposed that Sosia had told him a lie, than that Alcmena had by a miracle learned what only he and Sosia could tell her, without seeing either of them; this inaccuracy is removed by introducing such a supposition, and making the dialogue correspond with it. In the second Act, Jupiter, in the character of Amphitryon, leaves Alcmena with much reluctance, pretending haste to return to the camp, and great solicitude to keep his visit to her a secret from Thebans; yet when he appears again in the third Act, which he knew would be taken for the third appearance of Amphitryon, he does not account for his supposed second appearance at the return of the real Amphitryon, just after his departure, which seems to be absolutely necessary to maintain his borrowed character consistently; and without dropping the least hint of his being no longer solicitous to conceal his excursion from the camp, he sends Sosia to invite several of the citizens to dinner. Many other inaccuracies less considerable and less apparent have been removed, which it is not necessary to point out: whoever shall think it worth while diligently to compare the play as it stood, with the altered copy, can scarce fail to see the reason of the alterations as they occur. It must be confessed that there are still many things in Amphitryon, which, though I did not obliterate, I would not have written; but I think none of these are exceptionable in a moral view." Let us add to this, that the Doctor altered also some of Dryden's songs, and substituted others which are very flat. In the Prologue he says:

"The scenes which Plautus drew to-night we shew,
Touched by Molière, by Dryden taught to glow.
Dryden!—in evil day his genius rose,
When wit and decency were constant foes:
Wit then defiled in manners and in mind,
Whene'er he sought to please, disgrac'd mankind,
Freed from his faults, we bring him to the fair."

A German *littérateur*, Heinrich von Kleist (1776-1811) has also written an *Amphitryon*, in which he freely imitates Molière. The great difference is in the conversation between Jupiter, as Amphitryon, and Alcmena, which, in the German author is full of a certain kind of mystic sentimentality, and in which Jove, disguised as Amphitryon, informs her that the real Amphitryon, who has visited her, is the father of gods and men.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

IN THE PROLOGUE.

MERCURY.

|

NIGHT.

IN THE COMEDY.

JUPITER, *in the form of Amphitryon.*

MERCURY, *in the form of Sosia.*

AMPHITRYON, *general of the Thebans.*

ARGATIPHONTIDAS,

NAUCRATES,

POLIDAS,

PAUSICLES,

} *Theban captains.*

SOSIA, *Amphitryon's servant.*²

ALCMENA, *Amphitryon's wife.*

CLEANTHIS, *her maid, Sosia's wife.*

Scene.—THEBES, BEFORE AMPHITRYON'S HOUSE.

² This part was played by the author himself. In the inventory given by M. Soulié. and so often quoted, Molière's dress in the character of Sosia consists of: "the sleeves and the lower part of the theatrical classical cuirass (*tonnelet*) of green taffeta, with a small lace of fine silver, a chemisette of the same taffeta, two leggings of red satin, a pair of shoes, with tags ornamented with silver lace, with a silk stocking of a peculiar kind of light green colour (*Céladon*), the festoons, the belt and a skirt, and a cap, embroidered with fine gold and silver."

AMPHITRYON.

PROLOGUE.

MERCURY, *on a cloud*; NIGHT, *drawn through the air by two horses*.

MERC. Gently ! charming Night, deign to stay a-while. Some help is wanted of you ; and I have two words to say to you from Jupiter.

NIGHT. Ah ! it is you, Sir Mercury ! who would have thought of you in such a position ?

MERC. Upon my word, getting tired, and not being able to fulfil the different duties which Jupiter lays upon me, I quietly sat down on this cloud to await your coming.

NIGHT. You are jesting, Mercury ; and you do not mean it ; does it become the gods to say that they are tired ?

MERC. Are the gods made of iron ?

NIGHT. I wot not ; but it is meet to preserve continually the divine decorum. There are certain words the use of which lowers this sublime attribute, and which should be left to men, because they are undignified.

MERC. How easily you speak of it ; and you have, fair charmer, a chariot, in which, like a careless great lady, you are drawn by two good horses wherever you like. But it is not the same thing with me, and I cannot, in my fatal destiny, bear the poets too great a grudge, for their extreme impertinence, in having, by an unjust law, of which they wish to keep up the custom, given to each

god, for his behoof, a special conveyance, and have left me to go on foot, me, like a village messenger ; I, who, as is well known, am the famous messenger of the sovereign of the gods, in the skies and on the earth ; and who, without exaggerating anything, stand more than any one else in need of the means of travelling about, on account of all the duties which he lays upon me.

NIGHT. How can you help it ? The poets do as they like. It is not the first stupidity which we have seen these gentlemen commit. But at any rate, your irritation against them is unreasonable, for the wings at your feet are due to their care.

MERC. Yes ; but does one tire oneself less in going more quickly ?

NIGHT. Let us leave this, Sir Mercury, and come to the point.

MERC. It is Jupiter, as I have told you, who wishes the sombre favour of your cloak for a certain gallant adventure, with which a new love-affair provides him. His tactics are not new to you, I believe : he very often neglects the skies for the earth ; and you are not ignorant that this master of the gods is fond of becoming humanized for mortal beauties, and has a hundred ingenious tricks to vanquish the most cruel. He has felt the darts of Alcmena's eyes ; and whilst Amphitryon, her husband, commands the Theban troops on Beœtia's plains, he has assumed his form, and under that disguise relieves his pains, in the possession of the sweetest pleasures. The condition of the wedded pair is propitious to his flame : Hymen has united them only a few days since ; and the still young fire of their tender love has made Jupiter have recourse to this pretty artifice. In this case his stratagem has proved successful ; but with many a cherished object a similar disguise would be of no use, and to assume the form of a husband is not everywhere a good means of pleasing.

NIGHT. I admire Jupiter, and I cannot conceive all the disguises that come into his head.

MERC. In this way, he wishes to have a taste of all sorts of conditions ; and it is not at all acting as a stupid god. From whatever point of view he may be regarded by mortals, I would think very little of him if he never aban-

doned his redoubtable mien, and were always full of affection, in the highest part of Heaven. (In my opinion, there can be nothing more foolish than to be always imprisoned in one's grandeur; and, above all, a lofty rank becomes very inconvenient in the transports of amorous ardour.) Jupiter, who, no doubt, is a good judge of pleasure, knows how to descend from the height of his supreme glory; and, to enter into every thing that pleases him, he leaves his individuality behind him, and it is no longer Jupiter who appears.

NIGHT. One might yet overlook seeing him descend from his sublime estate to enter into that of men, to enjoy all the transports of which their hearts are capable, and to accommodate himself to their jests, if, in the changes to which his disposition drives him, he would confine himself to human nature. But to see Jupiter as a bull, a serpent, a swan, or anything else, I do not think it nice, and am not at all astonished that it is sometimes talked about.

MERC. Let all the cavillers talk: such changes have a charm which surpasses their understanding. This god knows well enough what he is about there as elsewhere: and that, in the movements of their tender passions, the brutes are not so stupid as one would think.

NIGHT. Let us return to the fair one whose favours he enjoys. If, by his stratagem, he finds that his passion is successful, what more can he wish, and what can I do?

MERC. That, to satisfy the desires of his enamoured soul, you should slacken the pace of your horses, to make of so delightful a night, the longest night of all; that you should allow more time to his transports, and that you should retard the break of day which must hasten the return of him whose place he takes.

NIGHT. This is no doubt a nice employment, which the great Jupiter reserves for me! And an honourable name is given to the service required of me!

MERC. You are rather old-fashioned for so young a goddess! Such an employment has nothing degrading except among people of low birth. When one has the happiness of being in a lofty rank, whatever is done is always well and good; and things change their names according to what one may be.

NIGHT. You know more about such matters than I do ; and I shall believe in your superior knowledge, and accept this employment.

MERC. Now, now, Madam Night, a little gently, I pray. In the world you have the reputation of not being so particular. In a hundred different climates you are made the confidant of many gallant adventures : and, to tell you my mind plainly, I believe that we have nothing with which to reproach each other.

NIGHT. Let us drop these bickerings, and remain what we are. Let us not give mankind cause to laugh by telling each other the truth.

MERC. Farewell. I am going yonder on this business, promptly to doff the form of Mercury, to don the figure of Amphitryon's servant.

NIGHT. I am going to make a stay in this hemisphere with my dark train.

MERC. Good day, Night.

NIGHT. Farewell, Mercury.³

(Mercury descends from his cloud ; Night crosses the stage.)

ACT I

SCENE I.—SOSIA, *alone*.

Who goes there? He? My fear increases at every step! Gentlemen, I am a friend to everyone. Ah! what extraordinary boldness to be abroad at such an hour as this! What a scurvy trick, my master, covered as he is with glory, plays me here! What! would he have me set out in such a dark night, if he had any love for his fellow-man! Could he not as well have waited till daylight, to send me to announce his return and the details of his victory? To what slavery is thy life subjected, Sosia!

³ Molière got the primary idea of this Prologue from Plautus' *Amphitryon* (Act i., Scene 1), where Mercury addresses Night thus: "Go on, Night, as you've begun, and pay obedience to my father. In best style, the best of services are you performing for the best of beings; in giving this, you reap a fair return."

Our lot is much harder with the great than with the little. (They will have it that everything in nature be compelled to be sacrificed to them. Night and day, hail, wind, danger, heat cold, the moment they speak we must fly. Twenty long years of hard services avail us nothing with them. The slightest whim draws down their anger upon us. In spite of all this, our foolish hearts cling to the empty honour of remaining with them, and will be contented with the false notion, which all other people share, that we are happy.⁴ In vain, reason calls us to retire; in vain our spite sometimes consents to this; their presence has too powerful an influence on our zeal, and the slightest favour of a caressing look re-engages us more firmly than ever. But at last, I perceive our house through the darkness, and my fear vanishes.⁵ I must have some set speech for my mission. I owe to Alcmena some military sketch of the great battle which sent all our enemies to the right-about. But how the deuce am I to describe it, when I was not there? No matter, let us speak of cut and thrust, as if I had been eye-witness. How many people tell of battles, from which they kept far enough away! In order to act my part with credit, I will rehearse it a little. This is supposed to be the room in which I enter as the bearer of despatches; and this lantern is Alcmena, whom I have to address.⁶ (*He sets his lantern on the ground and addresses his speech to it*). Madam, Amphitryon, my master and your husband, . . . (Good! that is a nice beginning!) whose thoughts are ever filled with your charms, has been pleased to choose me from amongst all

⁴ Sosia expresses himself as a courtier of Louis XIV. Plautus' Sosia complains only of the harsh condition of a slave, but says nothing "of the honour of remaining" with the master.

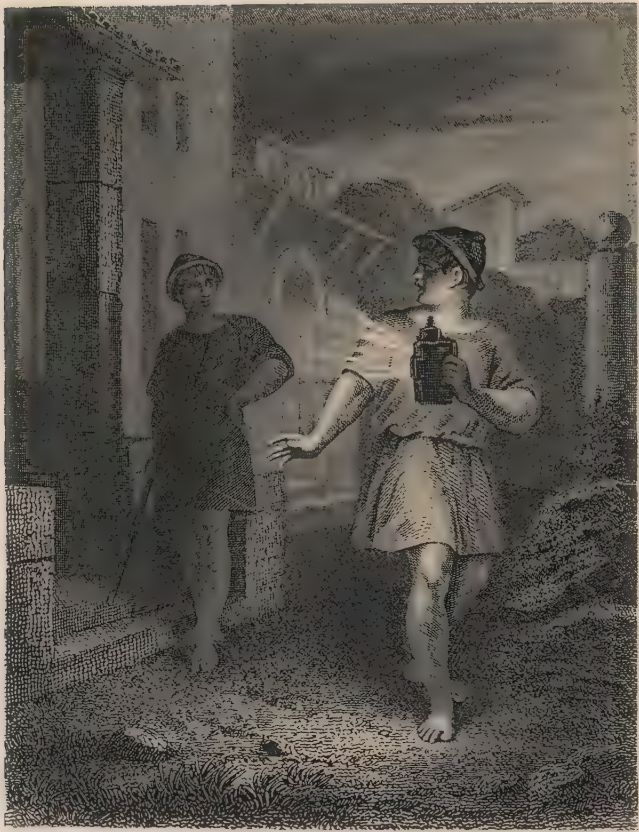
⁵ In Plautus' *Amphitryon*, Sosia is very much afraid of meeting some one, and of being beaten. Still, he seems in no hurry to arrive, for he utters a soliloquy of about two hundred lines. Molière makes Sosia perceive the house, and thus his fear vanishes.

⁶ The scene in which Sosia addresses the lantern is an imitation of a scene in the fifth fable of the third night of the *Piacevoli Notti* of Straparola; with this difference, that, in the Italian tale, the servant who has killed the bull with the golden horns, in order to give those horns to his mistress, hangs his clothes upon a branch of a tree, and then addresses them in an explanatory speech, which he intends afterwards to deliver to his master, who has confided the bull to his guard.

to give you tidings of the success of his arms, and of his desire to be with you. "Ah! really, my good Sosia, I am heartily delighted to see you back again." Madam, you do me too much honour, and my lot is to be envied. (Well answered!) "How fares Amphitryon?" Madam, as a man of courage should, whenever an occasion offers for behaving with glory. (Capital! that is well conceived!) "When will he, by his charming return, satisfy my heart?" As quickly as he can, assuredly, Madam, but much less early than his heart desires. (Ah!) "But in what state has the war left him? What says he? What does he? Set my heart at rest." He says far less than he does, Madam, and makes his enemies tremble. (Plague! where do I get all these pretty speeches?) What are the rebels doing? tell me, what is their present condition?" They could make no stand against us, Madam; we cut them to pieces, put their chief, Pterelas,⁷ to death, took Telebos⁸ by storm; and the whole port rings already with our prowess. "Ah! what success! ye gods! Who could ever have thought it? Tell me, Sosia, how it all occurred." Willingly, Madam; and without boasting. I can give you, very accurately, the details of this victory. Imagine, then, Madam, that Telebos is on this side. (*Sosia marks the places on his hand, or on the ground*). It is a city really almost as large as Thebes. The river is, as it were, there. Our people encamped here; and that space here was occupied by our enemies. On a height, somewhere thereabout, was their infantry; and a little lower down, towards the right, their cavalry. After having addressed our prayers to the gods, and issued every order, the signal was given. The enemy, thinking to cut out work for us, divided their horse into three platoons; but we soon cooled their courage, and you shall see how. There, is our vanguard eager to be at work; there, stood the archers of our king, Creon; and here, was the main body of the army (*Some noise from within*), which was

⁷ Pterelas did not live in the time of Amphitryon, but was the son of Taphius, a son of a niece of Alcæus, the father of Amphitryon. Plautus and Molière have made the same mistake.

⁸ Telebos was the capital of the island of Taphe, not far from Ithaca, on the coast of Acarnania.



AMPHITRYON.

about to . . . Stay, the main body of the army is afraid; I hear some noise, methinks.⁹

SCENE II.—MERCURY, SOSIA.

MERC. (*In the form of Sosia, coming out of Amphytrion's house*). Under this guise which resembles him, let us drive away this babbler, whose unfortunate arrival might disturb the happiness which our lovers are enjoying together.)

Sos. (*Not seeing Mercury*). My spirits revive a little, and after all, I think it was nothing. For fear of a sinister adventure, however, let us go and finish the conversation indoors.

MERC. (*Aside*). Unless you be stronger than Mercury, I shall prevent your doing so.

Sos. (*Without seeing Mercury*). This night seems to me inordinately long. Judging by the time I have been on the way, my master must have mistaken evening for morning, or fair Phœbus lies too long in bed through having taken too much wine.

MERC. (*Aside*). With what irreverence this lout speaks of the gods! My arm shall just now chastise well this insolence; and I shall have some real fun with him by stealing his name as well as his likeness.

Sos. (*Perceiving Mercury a little way off*). Ah! upon my word, I was right after all: it is all over with me, poor wretch! I perceive, before our house, a man, whose mien bodes me no good. To appear easy, I shall hum a little.¹⁰
(*He sings*).

MERC. What fellow is this, who takes the liberty to sing and to deafen me in this manner? (*As Mercury speaks, Sosia's voice grows gradually weaker*). Does he wish me to give him a drubbing?

Sos. (*Aside*). Assuredly that fellow has no love for music.¹¹

⁹ Plautus' Sosia gives a serious and detailed narrative of the battle; Molière's preserves the real comedy tone.

¹⁰ Compare Nick Bottom in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* (Act iii., Scene 1), saying, "I will sing that they shall hear I am not afraid."

¹¹ This dialogue is imitated from Plautus, except Sosia's remark about the fellow having no love for music.

MERC. For the last week, I have found no one whose bones I could break ; my arm loses its strength in this idleness ; and I am looking out for some back to regain my cunning.

Sos. (*Aside*). What the deuce of a fellow is this? My heart is big with mortal fear. But why should I tremble so? Perhaps the fellow is just as much afraid as I am, and speaks in that way to hide his fear underneath a pretended audacity. Yes, yes, let us not allow him to think us a goose. If I am not bold, let me try to appear so. Let us reason ourselves into courage ; he is alone like me ; I am strong, I have a good master, and there is our house.

MERC. Who goes there ?

Sos. I.

MERC. Who, I ?

Sos. I. (*Aside*). Courage, Sosia.

MERC. What is your condition in life, tell me ?

Sos. To be a man, and to speak.

MERC. Are you master, or servant ?

Sos. As the whim takes me.

MERC. Whither are your steps bent ?

Sos. Where I intend to go.

MERC. Ah ! this displeases me.

Sos. I am delighted to hear it.

MERC. Positively, by fair means or foul, I shall know from you, wretch, what you are doing, where you came from before day-break, whither you are going, and who you may be.

Sos. I do good and ill by turns ; I come hence ; I go thither ; I belong to my master.¹²

MERC. You show some wit, and you have a mind, I perceive, to assume with me the man of importance. I feel inclined, to make acquaintance, to give you a box on the ear with my own hand.

Sos. To me ?

MERC. To you ; and there it is for you, to make sure of it. (*Mercury slaps Sosia's face*).

Sos. Ho ! ho ! this is in earnest ?

¹² Nearly the whole of this lively dialogue is partly imitated from Plautus.

MERC. No, it is only for fun, and in answer to your jokes.

SOS. Zounds ! friend, how you deal your blows about without one's saying anything to you.

MERC. These are the least of my blows ; my little ordinary boxes on the ear.

SOS. Were I as hasty as you, we should make nice work of it.

MERC. All this is nothing as yet. We shall see something better anon ; but to provide a little interval, let us continue our conversation.

SOS. I give up the game. (*Wishes to go.*

MERC. (*Stopping him*). Where are you going ?

SOS. What does it matter to you ?

MERC. I wish to know where you are going.

SOS. To get that door opened to me. Why do you detain me ?

MERC. If you are impudent enough to go only near it, I shall shower down a storm of blows upon you.

SOS. What ! you wish, by your threats, to prevent my entering our own house ?

MERC. How ! our house ?

SOS. Yes, our house.

MERC. O, the wretch ! you belong to that house, you say ?

SOS. Indeed I do. Is not Amphitryon the master of it ?

MERC. Well ! what does that prove ?

SOS. I am his servant.

MERC. You !

SOS. I.

MERC. His servant ?

SOS. Without a doubt.

MERC. The servant of Amphitryon ?

SOS. Of Amphitryon, of him.

MERC. Your name is ? . . .

SOS. Sosia.

MERC. Heh ! what ?

SOS. Sosia.

MERC. Harkee ! do you know that, with my fist, I shall knock you down on the spot ?

Sos. For what? What fury seizes you?

MERC. Tell me, who made you so rash as to assume the name of Sosia?

Sos. I, I do not assume it; I have had it all my life.

MERC. O what a horrible lie, and what extreme impudence! You dare to maintain that Sosia is your name!

Sos. Indeed I do; I maintain it, for the very good reason that the gods have so ordained it by their supreme decree, and that it lies not in my power to say nay, and to be any other than myself.

MERC. A thousand cudgel-strokes ought to be the reward of such effrontery.

Sos. (*Beaten by Mercury*). Justice, citizens! Help! I beseech you.

MERC. How, you hang-dog, you cry out!

Sos. You kill me with a thousand blows, and you do not wish me to cry out?

MERC. It is thus that my arm . . .

Sos. It is an unworthy action. (You take advantage of the superiority which my want of courage gives you over me; and that is not fair.) It is mere hectoring to wish to profit by the poltroonery of those whom we thrash. To beat a man who we know will not fight, is not a generous action; and to show courage against those who have none, is blamable.

MERC. Well! are you Sosia now? what say you?

Sos. Your blows have effected no metamorphosis in me; and all the change that I can find in the case is that I am Sosia beaten.

MERC. (*Threatening Sosia*). Again! A hundred fresh blows for this new impudence.

Sos. Pray, cease your blows.

MERC. Then cease your insolence.

Sos. Anything you please; I keep silence. The dispute is too unequal between us.

MERC. Are you Sosia still? say, wretch?

Sos. Alas! I am what you please: dispose of my fate entirely according to your wish; your arm has made you master of it.

MERC. Your name was Sosia, by what you said?

SOS. It is true, until now I thought the thing plain enough; but your stick has made me see that I was mistaken in the matter.

MERC. It is I who am Sosia, and all Thebes confesses it: Amphitryon has never had any other than me.

SOS. You, Sosia?

MERC. Yes, Sosia! and if any one plays tricks with him, let him look to himself.

SOS. (*Aside*). Heaven! must I thus renounce my own self, and see my name stolen from me by an impostor. How extremely fortunate it is for him that I am a coward, or else, 'sdeath! . . .

MERC. You are murmuring, I know not what, between your teeth.

SOS. No. But, in the name of the gods, give me leave to speak for one moment to you.

MERC. Speak.

SOS. But promise me, I pray, that there shall be no blows. Let us sign a truce.¹³

MERC. Proceed: go on, I grant you that point.

SOS. Who, tell me, put this fancy into your head? What good will it do you to take my name away from me? And, even were you a demon, could you, in short, prevent me from being myself, from being Sosia?

MERC. (*Lifting his stick*). How! Can you . . .

SOS. Ah! hold; we have discarded blows.

MERC. What! hangdog, impostor, rascal! . . .

SOS. As for names, call me as many as you like; these are slight wounds, and I am not angry at them.

MERC. You say you are Sosia?

SOS. Yes. Some nonsensical tale has been . . .

MERC. Now then, I break our truce, and take back my word.

SOS. No matter. I cannot annihilate myself for you, and stand a speech so very improbable. Is it in your power to be what I am? and can I cease to be myself? Did anyone ever hear of such a thing? And can one give the lie to a hundred convincing proofs? Do I dream? Am I asleep? Is my mind disturbed by some powerful

¹³ This dialogue is again followed from Plautus.

transport? Do I not plainly feel that I am awake? Am I not in my right senses? Has not my master, Amphitryon, charged me to come hither to Alcmena his wife? Am I not to extol his love for her, and to give an account of his deeds against our enemies? Have I not just come from the harbour? Have I not a lantern in my hand? Have I not found you in front of our dwelling? Did I not talk to you in a perfectly kind manner? Do you not take an advantage of my cowardice, to hinder me from entering our house? Have you not spent your rage upon my back? Have you not belaboured me with blows? Ah! all this is but too real; and would to Heaven, it were less so! Cease therefore to insult a wretch's lot; and leave me to acquit myself of the calls of my duty.

MERC. Stop, or the least step brings down upon your back a thundering outbreak of my just wrath. All that you have mentioned just now is mine, except the blows.

Sos. This lantern knows how, my heart full of fear, I departed this morning from the vessel. Has not Amphitryon sent me to Alcmena, his wife, from the camp?

MERC. You have told a lie. It was I whom Amphitryon deputed to Alcmena, and who, at this moment, arrives from the Persian Port;¹⁴ I, who come to announce the valour of his arm which gained us a complete victory, and slew the chief of our enemies. In short, it is I who assuredly am Sosia, son of Davus, an honest shepherd; brother to Harpago who died in a foreign country; husband to that prude Cleanthis, whose temper drives me mad; who has received a thousand lashes at Thebes, without ever saying aught about it; and who was formerly publicly marked on the back, for being too honest a man.¹⁵

Sos. (*Quietly aside*). He is right. Unless one be Sosia, one cannot know all he says; and amidst the astonishment which seizes upon me, I begin, in my turn, to believe him a little. In fact, now that I look at him, I

¹⁴ According to Riley, Plautus is here guilty of an anachronism; for the "Portus Persicus," which was on the coast of Eubœa, was so called from the Persian fleet lying there on the occasion of the expedition to Greece, many ages after the time of Amphitryon.

¹⁵ Among the ancients, marking with a red-hot iron upon the shoulder was unknown as a public punishment. In Plautus, Sosia says, that he has been whipped.

perceive that he has my figure, my face, my gestures. Let me ask him some question, in order to clear up this mystery. (*Aloud*). What did Amphitryon obtain for his share of all the plunder taken from our enemies?

MERC. Five very large diamonds, neatly set in a cluster, with which their chief used to adorn himself as a rare piece of workmanship.¹⁶

SOS. For whom does he intend such a rich present?

MERC. For his wife; and he wishes her to wear them.

SOS. But where is it placed at present, until it shall be brought?

MERC. In a casket sealed with the arms of my master.¹⁷

SOS. (*Aside*). He does not tell a single lie in any of his answers; and I begin really to be in doubt about myself. With me he is already, by sheer force, Sosia; and he might perhaps also be he by reason. And yet when I touch myself and recollect, it seems to me that I am myself. Where shall I find some trustworthy light to clear up what I see? What I have done alone, and what no one has seen, cannot be known unless by myself. By that question, I must astonish him; and that is enough to puzzle him, and we shall see. (*Aloud*). When they were fighting, what did you do in our tents; whither you ran alone to hide yourself?

MERC. From off a ham . . .

SOS. (*Quietly aside*). That is it!

MERC. Which I unearthed, I bravely cut two juicy slices, with which I stuffed myself nicely. And adding thereto a wine of which they are very chary, and the sight of which pleased me even before I tasted it, I imbibed some courage for our people who were fighting.

SOS. (*Softly aside*). This matchless proof concludes well in his favour; and, unless he were in the bottle, nothing is to be said against it.¹⁸ (*Aloud*). From the

¹⁶ In Plautus, Amphitryon receives a "golden goblet" for his share, which has become almost historical, because historians have mentioned it, and described its form.

¹⁷ Arms were unknown to the ancients, for heraldry came in only with chivalry. But the ancients used signet rings upon which was engraved some peculiar sign.

¹⁸ This is also taken from Plautus; only Mercury speaks there of "an earthen pot," and not of a bottle.

proofs laid before me, I cannot deny that you are Sosia, and I acknowledge it. But, if you are he, tell me whom you wish me to be ; for after all I must be somebody.

MERC. When I shall be no longer Sosia, you may be he, I agree to that ; but while I am he, it will be your death to take such a fancy into your head.

SOS. All this confusion sets my wit on edge, and reason is contrary to what one sees. But there must be an end to this somehow or other ; and the shortest way for me is to go in there.

MERC. Ah ! you hangdog, you, with another taste of the stick.

SOS. (*Beaten by Mercury*). Ah ! what is this ? Great gods ! he strikes harder still ; and my back will be sore for a month to come. Let me leave this devil of a fellow, and return to the harbour. O just Heavens, I have made a pretty embassy !

MERC. (*Alone*). At last I have made him fly ; and, by this treatment, he has got his punishment for many of his deeds. But I perceive Jupiter, who, very politely, escorts the amorous Alcmena.

SCENE III.—JUPITER *under the form of Amphitryon*, ALCMENA, CLEANTHIS, MERCURY.

JUP. Forbid, dear Alcmena, the torch-bearers to approach. They afford me delight in beholding you ; but might betray my coming hither, which had best remain concealed. My love, restrained by all these weighty cares with which the glory of our arms held me fettered, has stolen the moments which it has just given to your charms from the duties of my post. This theft, which my heart devoted to your beauty, might be blamed by the public voice ; and the only witness whom I wish, is she who can thank me for it.

ALC. I take great interest, Amphitryon, in the glory which your illustrious exploits shed upon you ; and the fame of your victory moves my heart in its most sensible part. But when I perceive that this fatal honour keeps away from me him whom I love, I cannot forbear, in my excessive tenderness, to bear it some ill-will, and even to cavil at the supreme order which makes you the Thebans'

general. (It is sweet after a victory to see the glory of one whom we love; but among the perils inseparable from this glory, a fatal stroke, alas! may quickly come.) With how many fears is our heart seized at the rumour of the slightest skirmish! In the horrors of such a thought, can we ever see aught with which to console ourselves for the threatened blow? And with whatever laurels the conqueror may be crowned, whatever share one may have in that high honour, is it worth that which it costs to a tender heart, which trembles every moment for him whom it loves?¹⁹

JUP. I see nothing in you but what increases my passion; everything proves to my eyes a thoroughly enamoured heart; and it is, I own it, a charming thing, to find so much love in a beloved object. But, if I may dare to say so, one scruple troubles me in the tender sentiments which you show to me; and in order to relish them the more, my passion, dear Alcmena, would owe nothing to your duty. Let the favours, which I receive from you, be due to your love, and to my person only; and let not my position as your husband be the motive for their bestowal.

ALC. It is from that name, however, that the ardour which devours me holds its right to show itself; and I do not understand this new scruple with which your passion is perplexed.

JUP. Ah! the love and tenderness which I have for you exceeds also that of a husband; and in those sweet moments you are not aware of its delicacy: you do not understand that an enamoured heart is studiously intent upon a hundred trifles, and worries itself about the manner

¹⁹ The Alcmena of Plautus utters sentiments more worthy of a Roman matron. This is what she says of her husband (Act ii., Scene 2): "This, at least, makes me happy, that he has conquered the foe, and has returned home laden with glory. Let him be absent, if only with fame acquired he betakes himself home. I shall bear and ever endure his absence with mind resolved and steadfast; if only this reward is granted me, that my husband shall be hailed the conqueror in the warfare, sufficient for myself will I deem it. Valour is the best reward; valour assuredly surpasses all things: liberty, safety, life, property and parents, country too, and children, by it are defended and preserved. Valour comprises everything in itself: all blessings attend him in whose possession is valour."

of being happy. (In me, fair and charming Alcmena, you behold a lover and a husband; but, to speak frankly, it is the lover only I care for; and I feel that, when near you, the husband checks him.) This lover, jealous of your affection to the last degree, wishes your love to abandon itself to him alone; and his passion desires nothing that the husband gives him. From the fountain-head, he wishes to obtain your love, and to owe nothing to the bonds of wedlock; nothing to a wearying duty which makes the heart ache, and by which the sweetness of the most valued favours is daily poisoned. In the scruples, in short, by which he is tormented, he wishes, in order to satisfy his delicacy, that you separate himself from that which is offensive to him, and that the husband be only for your virtue; and that the lover shall have all the affection and tenderness of your heart, which is all gentleness.)

ALC. Really, Amphitryon, you must be jesting, to talk in this manner; and I should be afraid, that if anyone heard you, you would be thought out of your right senses.

JUP. There is more sense in this discourse, Alcmena, than you think. But a longer stay would render me too guilty, and the time presses for my return to the port. Farewell. The harsh dictates of my duty tear me away from you for a while; but, fair Alcmena, try at least, I pray you, when you see the husband, to recollect the lover.

ALC. I do not separate that which the Gods unite, and husband and lover are very precious to me.

SCENE IV.—CLEANTHIS, MERCURY.

CLE. (*Aside*). O Heaven! how sweet are the caresses of an ardently beloved husband! and how far is my wretch of a husband from all this tenderness.

MERC. (*Aside*). I must inform Night that she has but to furl all her sails, and the sun may now arise from his bed to put out the stars.

CLE. (*Stopping Mercury*). What! Is it thus that you leave me?

MERC. And how then? Would you wish me not to acquit myself of my duty, and follow Amphitryon's footsteps?

CLE. But to separate from me in this abrupt fashion, you wretch.

MERC. A fine subject to be angry about ! We have still so long to remain together !

CLE. But what ! to go in such a brutal manner, without saying a single kind word to cheer me up.

MERC. Where the deuce would you have my brains fetch you this silly stuff from ? Fifteen years of marriage exhaust one's discourse ; and we have said all that we had to say to each other long ago.

CLE. Look at Amphitryon, you wretch ; see how he shows his ardour for Alcmena : and after that, blush for the little passion that you display towards your wife.

MERC. Eh ! good gracious, Cleanthis, they are still lovers. There comes a certain age when all this is done with ; and what in those beginnings suits them well enough, would look very awkward in us, old married folks. It would be a pretty sight to see us, face to face, saying sweet things to each other.

CLE. What ! perfidious wretch, am I past hoping that a heart might sigh for me ?

MERC. No, I should be sorry to say so ; but I have too grey a beard to dare to sigh, and I should make you die with laughter.

CLE. You hangdog, do you deserve the signal luck of having a virtuous woman like me for your wife ?

MERC. Great Heavens ! if anything you are too virtuous ; all this merit is of little value to me. Be a little less an honest woman, and do not pester my brains so much.

CLE. How ! do you find fault with me for being too virtuous ?

MERC. A woman's sweet temper is her chief charm ; and your virtue makes such a clamour that it never ceases deafening me.

CLE. You wish for a heart full of feigned tenderness, for those women with the laudable and pretty talent of knowing how to smother their husbands with caresses in order to make them swallow the existence of a gallant.

MERC. Upon my word, shall I tell you candidly ? An ideal evil affects only fools ; and I would take for my device : " Less honour and more quietness."

CLE. What ! would you endure, without repugnance, that I should love a gallant without any shame ?

MERC. Yes, if I were no longer pestered with your scolding, and if I could see you change your temper and your way. I would sooner have a convenient vice, than a worrying virtue. Farewell, Cleanthis, my dear soul ; I must follow Amphitryon.

CLE. (*lone*). Why has not my heart sufficient resolution to punish this infamous wretch ! Ah, how it maddens me, in this instance, to be an honest woman !

ACT. II.

SCENE I.—AMPHITRYON, SOSIA.

AMPH. Come here, you gallows-bird, come here. Do you know, Master Scoundrel, that your talk is enough for me to knock you down, and that my anger only waits for a stick to beat you as I wish ?

SOS. If you take it in that strain, Sir, I have nothing more to say ; and you will be always in the right.

AMPH. What, you wretch ! you wish to foist upon me as truths stories which I know to be impossibly extravagant ?

SOS. No : I am the servant, and you are the master ; it shall be just as you wish it, Sir.

AMPH. Come, I will suppress the anger that is burning within me, and listen at length to the details of your mission. I must clear up this confusion before seeing my wife. Collect yourself, consider well within yourself, and answer word for word to each question.

SOS. But for fear of making a mistake, tell me beforehand, if you please, in what manner you wish this matter explained. Shall I speak, Sir, according to my conscience, or in the manner usually employed when addressing the great ? Must I tell the truth, or am I to be complaisant ?

AMPH. No ; I shall only compel you to give me a very straightforward account.

SOS. Very well. That is sufficient, leave it to me ; you have only to question me.

AMPH. Upon the order which I lately gave you . . .

Sos. I set out, the skies veiled with a black crape, swearing strongly against you under this vexatious martyrdom, and cursing twenty times the order of which you speak.

AMPH. How so, you scoundrel!

Sos. Sir, you have only to say the word, and I shall tell lies, if you wish.

AMPH. That is how a servant shows his zeal for us! No matter. What happened to you on the road?

Sos. To have a mortal fright at the slightest object that I saw.

AMPH. Poltroon!

Sos. Nature has her whims in forming us; she bestows on us various inclinations; some find a thousand delights in exposing themselves; I find them in keeping myself safe.

AMPH. When you reached the house . . .

Sos. I wished to rehearse a little before the door, in what strain and in what manner I would give a glorious account of the battle.

AMPH. What then?

Sos. Some one came to disturb and embarrass me.

AMPH. Who?

Sos. Sosia; another I, jealous of your orders, whom you sent from the port to Alcmena, and who has as full knowledge of our secrets as I who speak to you.

AMPH. What tales!

Sos. No, Sir, it is the plain truth: this I, sooner than I, found himself at our house; and I swear to you, Sir, that I was there before I had arrived.

AMPH. Whence proceeds, I pray you, this confounded nonsense? Is it a dream? is it drunkenness? aberration of mind, or a bad joke?

Sos. No, it is the thing as it is, and not at all an idle tale. I am a man of honour, I give you my word! and you may believe it, if you please. I tell you that, believing to be but one Sosia, I found myself two at our house; and that of these two I's, jealous of each other, one is at home, and the other is with you; that the I whom you see here, tired to death, found the other I fresh, jovial, and active, and having no anxiety but to fight and break bones.

AMPH. I must be, I confess, of a temper very staid, very calm, and very gentle, to allow a servant to entertain me with such nonsense!

Sos. If you put yourself in a passion, no more conference between us; you know all is over at once.

AMPH. No, I will listen to you without excitement; I promised it. But tell me in sober conscience, is there any shadow of probability in this new mystery which you have just been telling me?

Sos. No; you are right, and the affair must appear to everyone past belief. It is an incomprehensible fact, an extravagant, ridiculous, irksome tale: it shocks common sense; but it is not the less a fact.

AMPH. How can a man believe it, unless he be bereft of his senses?

Sos. I did not believe it myself without the utmost difficulty. I thought myself touched in my mind to believe myself two, and for a long time I treated this other self as an impostor: but he forced me at last to recognise myself; I saw that it was I, without the least stratagem; from head to foot he is exactly like me—handsome, a noble mien, well favoured, charming manners; in short, two drops of milk are not more alike; and were it not that his hands are somewhat too weighty, I should be perfectly satisfied about it.

AMPH. With how much patience I must arm myself! But after all, did you not go into the house?

Sos. That is good, go in! He! In what way? Did I ever wish to listen to reason? and did I not forbid myself to enter our door?

AMPH. How?

Sos. With a stick, of which my back feels still the smarting pain.

AMPH. You have been beaten?

Sos. Indeed I have.

AMPH. And by whom?

Sos. By myself.

AMPH. You, beat yourself?

Sos. Yes, I; not the I that is here, but the I from the house, who strikes like four.

AMPH. Heaven confound you for talking to me thus!

Sos. I am not joking: the I whom I met just now has great advantages over the I who is speaking to you. He has a strong arm and a lofty courage; I have had proofs of it; and this devil of an I has thrashed me properly; he is a fellow who does impossible things.

AMPH. Let us have done. Have you seen my wife?

Sos. No.

AMPH. Why not?

Sos. For a sufficiently strong reason.

AMPH. Who hindered you, rascal? Explain yourself.

Sos. Must I repeat the same thing twenty times to you? I, I tell you, this I stronger than I; this I who, by force, took possession of the door; this I who made me decamp; this I who wishes to be the only I; this I jealous of myself; this valiant I, whose anger showed itself to this cowardly I; in short, this I who is at home; this I who has shown himself my master; this I who has racked me with blows.²⁰

AMPH. His brain must be disturbed by having had too much drink this morning.

Sos. May I be hanged if I have had anything but water! You may believe me on my oath.

AMPH. Then your senses must have been asleep, and some bewildering dream has shown you all these confused fancies which you foist upon me for truths.

Sos. As little as the other. I have not been asleep, and do not even feel inclined for it. I am speaking to you wide-awake; I was quite wide-awake this morning, upon my life, and quite wide-awake was also the other Sosia, when he belaboured me so well.

AMPH. Follow me; I command you to be silent: You have wearied my mind enough; and I must be the veriest fool to have the patience to listen to the nonsense which a servant utters.

Sos. (*Aside*). Every discourse is nonsense coming from an obscure fellow. If some great man were to say the same things, they would be exquisite words.

²⁰ In Plautus, Sosia, when interrogated by Amphitryon, who has been beating him, replies also, "I myself, who am now at home, beat me myself."

AMPH. Let us go in without waiting any longer. But here comes Alcmena in all her charms. Doubtless she does not expect me at this moment, and my arrival will surprise her.

SCENE II.—ALCMENA, AMPHITRYON, CLEANTHIS, SOSIA.

ALC. (*Without seeing Amphitryon*). Come, Cleanthis, let us approach the gods, and offer up our homages for my husband, and render them thanks for the glorious success, of which Thebes, by his arm, reaps the advantage. (*Perceiving Amphitryon*). O ye gods!

AMPH. Heaven grant that victorious Amphitryon may be once more met with pleasure by his wife! And that this day may be propitious to my passion, and restore you to me with the same affection! May I find as much fondness as my heart brings back to you!

ALC. What! returned so soon?

AMPH. Truly, this is, in this instance, to give me but a sorry proof of your affection: and this, "What! returned so soon," is hardly the language on such an occasion of a heart truly inflamed with love. I presumed to flatter myself that I had stayed away from you too long. The expectation of an ardently longed for return invests each moment with excessive length; and the absence of what we love, however short, is always too long.

ALC. I do not see . . .

AMPH. No, Alcmena, we measure the time in such cases by our own impatience; and you count the moments of absence as one who does not love. When we really love, the least separation kills us; and the one whom we delight to see never comes back too soon. I confess that my fond affection has reason to complain at your reception; and I expected different transports of joy and tenderness from your heart.

ALC. I am at a loss to understand on what you found the words which I hear you speak; and if you complain of me, I do not know in good truth what would needs satisfy you. It seems to me that last night, at your happy return, I showed a sufficiently tender joy, and repaid your proofs of affection by everything which you had reason to expect from my love.

AMPH. How ?

ALC. Did I not show plainly enough the sudden ecstasies of a perfect joy ! And can a heart's transports be better expressed at the return of a husband who is tenderly loved ?

AMPH. What is it you tell me ?

ALC. That even your affection showed an incredible joy at my reception ; and that, having left me at the break of day, I do not see that my surprise at this sudden return is so much to blame.

AMPH. Has some dream last night, Alcmena, anticipated in your fancy the reality of my return, which I hastened ; and having, perhaps, used me kindly in your sleep, does your heart imagine my love sufficiently repaid ?

ALC. Has some disease in your mind, Amphitryon, by its malignity, obscured the truth of last night's return ? and as to the tender welcome I gave you, does your heart pretend to rob me of all my honest affection ?

AMPH. Methinks this disease with which you entertain me is somewhat strange.

ALC. It is the only thing one can give in exchange for the dream of which you talk to me.

AMPH. Unless by a dream, one can certainly not excuse what you tell me now.

ALC. Unless by a disease which troubles your mind, one cannot justify what I hear from you.

AMPH. Let us have done with this disease for a moment, Alcmena.

ALC. Let us have done with this dream for a moment, Amphitryon.

AMPH. As to the subject in question, the jest may be carried too far.

ALC. Undoubtedly ; and, as a sure proof of it, I begin to feel somewhat moved.

AMPH. It is in this way then that you wish to try to make amends for the welcome of which I complained ?

ALC. And you wish to try to divert yourself by this feint ?

AMPH. For Heaven's sake ! let us cease this, I pray you, Alcmena, and let us talk seriously.

ALC. It is carrying the jest too far, Amphitryon; let us end this raillery.

AMPH. What! dare you maintain to my face that I was seen at this spot before this hour?

ALC. What! have you the assurance to deny that you came hither yesterday towards evening?

AMPH. I! I came yesterday?

ALC. Undoubtedly; and, just before the break of day, you went away again.

AMPH. (*Aside*). Heavens! was ever such a debate as this heard of? And who would not be astonished at all this? Sosia!

Sos. She has need of half-a-dozen grains of hellebore, Sir; her brain is turned.

AMPH. Alcmena, in the name of all the gods, this discourse will have strange consequences! Recollect yourself a little better, and reflect upon what you say.

ALC. I am indeed seriously reflecting; and all the inmates of the house witnessed your arrival. I do not know what motive makes you act thus; but if the thing had need of proof, if it were true that one could not recollect such a thing, from whom, but yourself, could I hold the news of the latest of all your battles, and the five diamonds worn by Pterelas, plunged into eternal night by the force of your arm? What surer proof could one wish?

AMPH. What? have I already given you the cluster of diamonds which I had for my share, and which I intended for you?

ALC. Assuredly it is not difficult to convince you thoroughly of it.

AMPH. And how?

ALC. (*Pointing to the cluster of diamonds at her girdle*). Here it is.

AMPH. Sosia!

Sos. (*Taking a casket from his pocket*). She is jesting, and I have it here. The feint is useless, Sir.

AMPH. (*Examining the casket*). The seal is unbroken?

ALC. (*Presenting the diamonds to Amphitryon*). Is it an illusion? There. Will you think this proof strong enough?

AMPH. O Heaven! O just Heaven!

ALC. Come, Amphitryon, you are joking with me by acting in this way; and you ought to be ashamed of it.

AMPH. Break this seal quickly.

SOS. (*Having opened the casket*). Upon my word, it is empty. It must have been abstracted by witchcraft, or else it must have come by itself, without a guide, to her whom it knew that it was intended to adorn.

AMPH. (*Aside*). Ye gods, whose power directs all things, what is this adventure, and what can I augur from it at which my passion startles not?

SOS. (*To Amphitryon*). If she speaks the truth, we share the same fate, and like me, Sir, you are double.²¹

AMPH. Hold your tongue.

ALC. What is there to be so much surprised at? and whence this great emotion?

AMPH. (*Aside*). O Heaven! what strange confusion! I see supernatural incidents, and my honour fears an adventure which my senses do not understand.

ALC. Do you still think to deny your sudden return, when you have so sensible a proof of it?

AMPH. No; but be so kind, if it be possible, to relate to me what happened at this return?

ALC. Since you ask an account of the matter, you still wish to insinuate that it was not you?

AMPH. Pray, pardon me; but I have a certain reason for asking you to relate it.

ALC. Have the important affairs which may occupy your mind, made you so soon lose the remembrance of it?

AMPH. Perhaps so: but, in short, you would oblige me by telling me the whole story.

ALC. The story is not long. I advanced towards you full of fond surprise; I embraced you tenderly, and more than once testified my joy.

AMPH. (*Aside*). Ah! I could have done without so sweet a welcome.

ALC. You first made me this valuable present, destined for me from the conquered plunder. Your heart vehemently

²¹ In *Plautus* (Act ii., Scene 2) Sosia says: "You have brought forth another Amphitryon, I have brought forth another Sosia; now if the goblet has brought forth a goblet, we have all produced our doubles."

unfolded to me all the fire of your passion, and the carking cares which had kept it enchained in the joy of seeing me again, the pangs, of absence, all the trouble caused by your impatience to return ; and never, on similar occasions, did your love seem to me so tender and so passionate.

AMPH. (*Aside*). Can one be more exquisitely tortured to death !

ALC. As you may well believe, all these transports, all this tenderness did not displease me ; and if I must confess it, my heart, Amphitryon, found a thousand charms in them.

AMPH. What then, pray ?

ALC. We interrupted each other with a thousand fond inquiries. The repast was served. (We supped by ourselves ; and the supper over, we retired to bed.)

AMPH. Together ?

ALC. Assuredly. What a question is that ?

AMPH. (*Aside*). Ah ; this is the most cruel blow of all, and of which my jealous passion trembles to assure itself.

ALC. Whence comes, at this word, so deep a blush ? Have I done any harm in sleeping with you ?

AMPH. No, to my great grief, it was not I ; and whosoever says that I came hither yesterday, tells, of all falsehoods, the most horrible.

(ALC. Amphitryon !

AMPH. Perfidious woman !

ALC. Ah ! what outburst is this !

AMPH. No, no, no more fondness, no more respect : this misfortune puts an end to all my firmness ; and my heart at this fatal moment, breathes only fury and revenge.

ALC. And on whom would you be revenged ? and what want of faith makes you treat me now as a criminal ?

AMPH. I know not, but it was not I ; and this is a despair which renders me capable of anything.

ALC. Away, unworthy husband, the fact speaks for itself, and the imposture is frightful. (This is taking too great an advantage of me, and it is too much to condemn me for faithlessness.) If, in this confused outburst, you are seeking a pretext for breaking the nuptial bonds which hold me enchained to you, all these excuses are superfluous,

for I am fully determined that this very day all our bonds shall be dissolved.²²

AMPH. After the disgraceful insult, which has been revealed to me, it is what, no doubt, you should prepare for: it is the least that can be expected; and things may perhaps not rest there. The dishonour is certain, my misfortune is plainly revealed to me, and my love endeavours in vain to conceal it from me; but I am as yet unacquainted with the particulars, and my just wrath demands to be enlightened. Your brother can openly vouch for it that I did not leave him until this morning: I am going to seek him, in order that I may confound you about this return which is falsely imputed to me. Afterwards, we shall penetrate to the bottom of a mystery unheard of until now; and, in the transports of a righteous wrath, woe be to him who has betrayed me.

SOS. Sir . . .

AMPH. Do not accompany me, but wait here for me.

CLE. (*To Alcmena*). Must I . . .

ALC. I can attend to nothing: leave me alone, and follow me not.²³

SCENE III.—CLEANTHIS, SOSIA.

CLE. (*Aside*). Something must have disordered his brain; but the brother will immediately put an end to this quarrel.

SOS. (*Aside*). This is a sufficiently severe blow for my master; and his adventure is cruel. I very much fear something of the same kind for myself, and I will very gently, explain myself to her.

CLE. (*Aside*). Let us see whether he will so much as speak to me! But I will let nothing appear.

²² In Plautus, when the real Amphitryon comes back, Alcmena expresses her astonishment at his unexpected return; but when her husband loads her with reproaches, she replies, like a true Roman matron, I have brought you "that which is called a dowry, I do not deem the same my dowry; but chastity, and modesty, and subdued desires, fear of the Gods, and love of my parents, and concord with my kindred; to be obedient to yourself, and bounteous to the good, ready to aid the upright." In Molière, Alcmena is the young loving Frenchwoman.

²³ This scene, which is really the principal one of the comedy, is wholly taken from Plautus.

Sos. (*Aside*). These things are often annoying to know, and I tremble to ask her. Would it not be better, for safety's sake, to remain altogether ignorant of what may be the truth? Yet, at all events, I must try and find out. I cannot help doing so. (One of the weaknesses of human nature is curiosity to learn things which it would not like to know. May Heaven preserve you, Cleanthis!

CLE. Ah! you dare to come near me, you wretch?

Sos. Great Heaven! what ails you? You are always in a temper, and you get angry about nothing!

CLE. What do you call about nothing? Say?

Sos. I call about nothing what is called about nothing in verse as well as prose; and nothing, as you well know, means nothing, or at least very little.

CLE. I do not know what prevents my scratching your eyes out, infamous wretch, and teaching you how far the anger of a woman can go.

Sos. Hullo! Whence comes this furious outburst?

CLE. What! then you reckon as nothing what you have done to me?

Sos. What?

CLE. What? you pretend to be innocent? Is it by the example of your master that you will say that you did not return here?

Sos. No, I know the contrary too well; but I shall not be cunning with you. We had drunk of I do not know what wine, which made me forget all that I might have done.

CLE. You imagine, perhaps, to excuse yourself by this trick . . .

Sos. No, seriously you may believe me. I was in a condition in which I may have done things for which I should be sorry, and of which I have no recollection.

CLE. You do not at all remember the manner in which you treated me when you came from the port?

Sos. Not in the least. You had better give me an account of it: I am just and sincere, and would condemn myself if I am wrong.

CLE. How! Amphytryon having warned me, I sat up until you came; but I never beheld such coldness: I had to remind you of your having a wife; and when I wished to kiss you, you turned away your head, and presented your ear.

SOS. Good !

CLE. What do you mean by good ?

SOS. Good Heavens ! You do not know why I talk thus, Cleanthis. I had been eating garlic, and like a well-behaved man did quite right in turning my breath a little away from you.

CLE. I gave you to understand the tenderness of my heart ; but you were as deaf as a post to all that I said ; and not a kind word passed your lips.

SOS. Courage !

CLE. In short, notwithstanding my advances, my chaste flame found nothing in you but ice ; and I felt disappointed to receive no response from you, even so far as to refuse to take your place in bed which the laws of wedlock oblige you to occupy.

SOS. What ! did I not go to bed ?

CLE. No, you sneak.

SOS. Is it possible ?

CLE. Wretch, it is but too true. Of all affronts this is the greatest ; and, instead of your heart making amends for it this morning, you separated from me with words of undisguised contempt.

SOS. Bravo, Sosia !

CLE. Eh, what !. This is the effect of my complaint ! You laugh at this pretty piece of work !

~~SOS.~~ Sos. How satisfied I am with myself !

CLE. Is this the way to express your regret for such an outrage ?

~~SOS.~~ Sos. I should never have believed that I could so well control myself.

CLE. Far from condemning yourself for such perfidious behaviour, you show your joy for it in your face !

SOS. Good gracious ! not so fast ! If I appear to be joyous, think that I have a strong inward reason for it, and that, without thinking of it, I never did better than in behaving to you in such a way just now.

CLE. Are you making fun of me, you wretch ?

SOS. No, I am speaking frankly to you. In the condition in which I was, I had a certain fear, which, by your words, you have dissipated. I was very apprehensive, and feared that I had committed some foolishness with you.

CLE. What is this fear ? and let us know wherefore ?

Sos. The doctors say that, when one is drunk, one should abstain from one's wife, and that, in that state there can be no other result than children who are dull, and who cannot live. Reflect, if my heart had not armed itself with coldness, what inconveniences might have followed !

CLE. I do not care a pin for doctors, with their insipid arguments. Let them give rules to the sick, without wishing to govern people who are in good health. They meddle with too many affairs in pretending to put a curb upon our chaste desires ; and in addition to the dog-days, they give us, besides their severe rules, a hundred cock-and-bull stories into the bargain.

Sos. Gently.

CLE. No. I maintain that theirs is a wrong conclusion ; those reasons emanate from crack-brained people. Neither wine nor time can be fatal to the performance of the duties of conjugal love ; and the doctors are asses.

Sos. I beseech you, moderate your rage against them ; they are honest people, whatever the world may say of them.

CLE. You are altogether in the wrong box ; your submission is in vain ; your excuse will not pass ; and sooner or later I will pay you out, between ourselves, for the contempt which you show me every day. I keep in mind all the particulars of our conversation, and I shall try to profit by the liberty which you allow me, you cowardly and perfidious husband.

Sos. What ?

CLE. You told me just now, you mean wretch, that you would freely consent that I should love another.

Sos. Ah ! as for that, I am wrong. I retract ; my honour is too much concerned. You had better beware of giving way to that passion.

CLE. If I can, however, but once make my mind up to it . . .

Sos. Let us suspend this conversation for a little. Amphitryon returns, who seems quite contented.

SCENE IV.—JUPITER, CLEANTHIS, SOSIA.

JUP. (*Aside*). I shall take this opportunity of appeasing Alcmena, of banishing the grief in which her heart wishes to indulge, and, under the pretext that brings me hither, of giving my passion the sweet pleasure of reconciling myself with her. (*To Cleanthis*). Alcmena is up stairs is she not?

CLE. Yes; full of uneasiness she seeks solitude, and has forbidden me to follow her.

JUP. Whatever prohibition she may have made does not apply to me.

SCENE V.—CLEANTHIS, SOSIA.

CLE. He has soon got over his grief, from what I can see.

Sos. What say you, Cleanthis, to this cheerful mien, after his terrible quarrel?

CLE. That we would do well to send all the men to the devil, and that the best of them is not worth much.

Sos. These things are said in a passion; but you are too much taken up with the men; and, upon my word, you would all look very glum, if the devil should carry us all off.

CLE. Indeed . . .

Sos. Hush. Here they come.

SCENE VI.—JUPITER, ALCMENA, CLEANTHIS, SOSIA.

JUP. Alas! Do you wish to drive me to despair? Stay, fair Alcmena.

ALC. No, I cannot stay with the author of my grief.

JUP. I entreat you!

ALC. Leave me.

JUP. What . . .

ALC. Leave me, I tell you.

JUP. (*Softly, aside*). Her tears touch me to the heart, and her grief saddens me. (*Aloud*). Allow my heart to

ALC. No, do not follow me.

JUP. Whither would you go?

ALC. Where you shall not be.²⁴

JUP. That would be a vain attempt on your part. I am attached to your beauty by too tight a bond to be separated for one moment from it. I shall follow you everywhere, Alcmena.

ALC. And I shall fly from you everywhere.

JUP. I am very dreadful, then!

ALC. More than I can express, to me. Yes, I look upon you as a frightful monster, a cruel, furious monster, whose approach is to be feared; as a monster to fly from everywhere. The sight of you gives me incredible pain; it is a torment that overwhelms me; and I see nothing under Heaven of what is frightful, horrible, odious, which would not be to me more bearable than you.

JUP. This is, alas! what your own mouth says.

ALC. I have much more in my heart; and it is but too sorry that it cannot find words to express it all.

JUP. And what has my passion done to you, Alcmena, that I should be looked upon by you as a monster.

ALC. Ah! just Heavens! and he can ask that? Is it not enough to drive one distracted?

JUP. Ah! in a gentler spirit . . .

ALC. No; I wish neither to see nor to hear anything of you.

JUP. Have you the heart to treat me thus? Is this the tender love which was to last so long, when I came hither yesterday?

ALC. No, no, it is not; and your cowardly insults have willed it otherwise. It exists no longer, this passionate and tender love; you have cruelly destroyed it in my heart by a hundred piercing wounds. In its place stands an unbending wrath, a keen resentment, an invincible contempt, the despair of a heart justly incensed, which intends to hate you for this grievous affront, as much as it intended to love you; and which means to hate as much as possible.

JUP. Alas! how little strength your love must have

²⁴ These two lines are also found, with some slight alteration, in the sixth Scene of the second Act of *Don Garcia of Navarre*. (See Vol. I., page 225).

had, if it can be destroyed by so small a matter! Must that which was only play, occasion a divorce? and is there any occasion to be so angry at a joke?

ALC. Ah! it is just this at which I am offended, and which my anger cannot forgive: I should have felt less hurt at the true outbursts of a fit of jealousy. Jealousy produces impressions of which the force often carries us away; and the most collected mind at such times finds it, without doubt, difficult enough to be answerable for its emotions. The violence of a heart which may have been mistaken has something to bring back a soul which it has offended, and in the love which gave it birth it finds, at least, in spite of all its violence, reasons for being excused. Those outbursts have always as an excuse against anger that cause which created them; and we easily forgive that which we cannot master. But, in wantonness of heart, to get into an uncontrollable fury, so deeply to injure, without cause, the tenderness and honour of a heart that dearly loves you, ah! is too cruel a blow, and one which my grief will never forget.

JUP. Yes, you are right, Alcmena; I must submit. This action is no doubt an odious crime; I do not pretend to defend it any longer: but allow my heart to exonerate itself in your eyes, and to tell who is to blame for this insulting outburst. To make a frank avowal of it, Alcmena, it is the husband who has committed all the evil; it is the husband whom you must regard as guilty: the lover had no share in this brutal transport, and his heart is not capable of offending you. This heart has too much respect and tenderness for you ever to dream of it; and if it had the guilty weakness to do aught to wound you, he would pierce it with a hundred stabs before your face. But the husband has stepped out of that humble respect which should always be your due; by his harsh proceeding, the husband has shown himself, and he thought that the laws of marriage permitted him everything. Yes, it is no doubt he who is guilty towards you; he alone has maltreated your amiable person. Hate, detest the husband; I consent to it, and leave him to your mercy; but, Alcmena, preserve the lover from the resentment which such an offence raises in you; do not

throw the effect of it on him; separate him somewhat from the guilty one; and, in order to be just, do not punish him for what he has not done.)

ALC. Ah! all these subtleties are but frivolous excuses; and such language is only an annoyance to irritated minds. You use in vain this ridiculous prevarication. I distinguish nothing in him who offends me; everything becomes the object of my anger, and in its just violence, the husband and the lover are confounded. Both alike occupy my thoughts; and, by my wounded heart, are painted in the same colours to my eyes. Both alike are criminal; both alike have offended me; and both alike are odious to me.

JUP. Very well! since you wish it, I must then charge myself with the crime. Yes, you are right when you immolate me to your resentment, as a guilty victim. A too just anger against me sways you; and all this great wrath which you now display is making me suffer only lawful torments. It is right that you shun me, and that in your anger you threaten to fly from me everywhere. I must be an odious object to you; you must wish me a great deal of harm. My transgression in having offended your charming eyes surpasses every horror; it is a crime to offend men and gods; and in short, I deserve as punishment for my audacity that your hatred should employ its most furious darts against me. But my heart craves your mercy; to ask it I throw myself on my knees, and implore it in the name of the most brilliant flame of the tenderest love with which a soul can ever burn for you. If your heart, charming Alcmena, refuses me the pardon which I dare to request, a sudden stroke must deliver me by death from the harsh rigour of a penalty which I am unable to endure. Yes, this condition drives me to despair. Do not think, Alcmena, that loving as I do, your heavenly charms, I can live one day under your anger. The merciless length of those moments makes my afflicted heart already succumb beneath their deadly blows; and the cruel wounds of a thousand vultures are nothing compared to my violent grief. Alcmena, you have only to declare it to me if I have no pardon to hope for: this sword shall immediately, by a well aimed blow, pierce before your eyes the heart of a miserable wretch;

that heart, that treacherous heart only too deserving of death, since it could offend so adorable a being; only too happy if, in descending to the dark regions, my death may appease your anger; and if after this mournful day, it leaves in your soul no impression of hatred whilst remembering my love! That is all which I expect as a sovereign favour.

ALC. Ah! too cruel husband!

JUP. Say, speak, Alcmena!

ALC. Must I still feel kindness for you, and see you outrage me by so many insults?

JUP. Whatever resentment an outrage may cause, can it hold out against the remorse of a really enamoured heart?

ALC. A heart full of passion would sooner expose itself to a thousand deaths, than offend the object of its love.

JUP. The more one loves, the less difficulty one feels . .

ALC. No, speak no more about it; you deserve my hatred.

JUP. You hate me then?

ALC. I make every effort to do so, and I am vexed to think that all your insults cannot bring my heart even so far to indulge in that revenge.

JUP. But why this violence, since, to revenge yourself, I offer you my life? Pronounce its doom, and immediately I shall obey.

ALC. Can she who cannot hate desire your death?

JUP. And I, I cannot live unless you forego this anger that overwhelms me, and unless you grant me the favour of a pardon which I implore at your feet. (*Sosia and Cleanthis kneel likewise*). Decide upon one of the two quickly, either to punish, or to absolve me.

ALC. Alas! what I can resolve has appeared much clearer than I wish. My heart has too well betrayed me, for me to wish to keep up the wrath which you mention: to say that we cannot hate, is it not saying that we forgive?

JUP. Ah, charming Alcmena, I must in the excess of my joy . . .

ALC. Desist; I am angry with myself for so much weakness.²⁵

²⁵ In Plautus, the real Amphitryon threatens his wife with a divorce, and

JUP. Go Sosia, and make haste ; a sweet rapture charms my soul. See what officers of the army you can find, and invite them to dine with me. (*Softly, aside*). Mercury can supply his place, while he is away from this.

SCENE VII.—CLEANTHIS, SOSIA.

SOS. Well ! Cleanthis, you see how they arrange matters. Will you, in imitation of their example, make up a little peace between us, some little reconciliation ?

CLEANT. For the sake of your beautiful face,²⁶ truly ! yes, to be sure.

SOS. What ! you will not then ?

CLEANT. No.

SOS. It signifies little to me. So much the worse for you.

CLEANT. Well, well, come back.

SOS. Zounds ! no, I shall do nothing of the kind, and I shall be angry in my turn now.

CLEANT. Get you gone, you wretch ! leave me alone : one gets weary sometimes of being a virtuous woman.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—AMPHITRYON, *alone*.

Yes, without doubt, fate conceals him purposely from me ; and I am weary at last of trying to find him out. Nothing can be more cruel than my lot. Notwithstanding

when Jupiter appears, under his semblance, and tries to make peace with Alcmena, she says (Act iii., Scene 2) :

ALC. By my virtue have I rendered these accusations vain. Since then I eschew conduct that's unchaste, I would wish to avoid imputations of unchastity. Fare you well, keep your own property to yourself, return me mine. Do you order any maids to be my attendants ?

JUP. Are you in your senses ?

ALC. If you don't order them, let me go alone ; chastity shall I take as my attendant. (*Going*).

JUP. Stay—at your desire, I'll give my oath that I believe my wife to be chaste. If in that I deceive you, then, thee supreme Jupiter, do I entreat that thou wilt ever be angered against Amphitryon.

ALC. Oh ! rather may he prove propitious.

²⁶ The original has *C'est pour ton nez, vraiment !* "It is for your nose, really."

all my peregrinations, I cannot find him for whom I am looking; I meet all those for whom I do not look. A thousand cruel bores, who do not imagine themselves to be so, without knowing much of me, are driving me mad with their congratulations upon our exploits. In the cruel perplexity of the care that harasses me, they overwhelm me with their embraces, and their rejoicings only increase my uneasiness. In vain I endeavour to pass them by, to fly from their persecutions; their killing friendship²⁷ delays me everywhere; and whilst I reply to the ardour of their expressions by a nod of the head, I silently mutter a hundred curses upon them. Ah! how little we feel flattered by praise and honour, and all the fruits of a great victory, when in our inmost soul we are suffering a poignant grief! And how willingly would we barter all this glory to have the heart at rest! Every minute my jealousy harps upon my disgrace; and the more my mind reverts to it, the less am I able to disentangle its direful confusion. The theft of the diamonds does not surprise me; seals may be tampered with unperceived; but she will have it that yesterday I presented the gift to her personally, and this is what puzzles me most cruelly. Nature sometimes produces resemblances, of which some impostors have availed themselves to deceive; but it is preposterous that, under such a semblance, a man should pass himself off as a husband; and in such a case there are a thousand differences which a wife can easily detect. The wonderful effects of Thessalian magic have at all times been extolled; but those famous stories, everywhere related of it, have always passed with me for idle tales; it would be a hard fate indeed, that I, fresh from a complete victory, should be compelled to believe them at the cost of my own honour.²⁸ I will once more interrogate her upon this vexatious mystery, and find out if it be not some idle fancy that has imposed upon her disordered senses. Grant, O righteous

²⁷ The original has *tuante amitié*; I do not think that the word *tuante*, killing, is often used in this way in French.

²⁸ The *Amphitryon* of Plautus thinks his "doubleganger" to be a magician, a sorcerer, an enchanter; but Molière's hero does not believe anything of the kind; he is therefore in a much greater perplexity, and his situation is much more comical.

Heavens, that this thought may prove true, and that, for my happiness, she may have lost her senses!

SCENE II.—MERCURY, AMPHITRYON.

MERC. (*On the balcony of Amphitryon's house, without being seen or heard by him*). Since love offers me no pleasures here, I will make myself some of a different nature; and enliven my dull leisure by putting Amphitryon out of all patience. This may not be very charitable in a god; but I shall not trouble myself much about that; I find, by my star, that I am somewhat disposed to malice.²⁹

AMPH. How comes it that at this hour the door is closed?

MERC. Hullo! gently. Who knocks?

AMPH. (*Not seeing Mercury*). I.

MERC. Who is I?

AMPH. (*Perceiving Mercury whom he takes for Sosia*). Ah! open!

MERC. Open indeed! And who may you be; to make such an uproar, and to speak in this strain?

AMPH. What! do not you know me?

MERC. No, and have no wish to.

AMPH. (*Aside*). Is every one losing his senses to-day? Has the distemper spread? Sosia! hullo, Sosia!

MERC. Well! Sosia, yes, that is my name; are you afraid of my forgetting it?

AMPH. Do you see me clearly?

MERC. Clearly enough. What can possess your arm to make so great a noise? What do you want down there?

AMPH. I, you hangdog! what do I want?

MERC. What do you not want then? speak, if you would have me understand you.

AMPH. Wait, you wretch! I will come up there with a stick to make you understand, and to teach you properly to dare speak to me in this manner.

MERC. Gently! If you make the slightest attempt at

²⁹ Mercury, in astrology, "signifieth subtil men, ingenious, inconstant; rymers, poets, advocates, orators, phylosophers, arithmeticians and busie fellows."

disturbance, I shall send from this some messengers which you will not like.

AMPH. Oh Heavens! has such insolence ever been heard of? Can one conceive it from a servant from a beggar!

MERC. Well! what is the matter? Have you quite summed me up? Have you stared enough at me? How wide he opens his eyes; how wild he looks! If looks could bite, he would have torn me to shreds ere now.

AMPH. I tremble at what you are bringing upon yourself with all these impudent remarks. What a terrible storm you are brewing for yourself! What a hurricane of blows will descend upon your back?

MERC. Look here, friend; if you do not make yourself scarce from this place, you may come in for some knocking about.

AMPH. Ah! you shall know to your cost, you scoundrel, what it is for a servant to insult his master.

MERC. You, my master!

AMPH. Yes, scoundrel! dare you deny me?

MERC. I recognise no other master but Amphitryon.

AMPH. And who, except myself, can this Amphitryon be?

MERC. Amphitryon!

AMPH. No doubt.

MERC. What illusion is this! Tell me in what honest tavern have you been muddling your brain?

AMPH. What! again?

MERC. Was the wine of the right sort?

AMPH. O Heavens!

MERC. Was it old or new?

AMPH. What insults!

MERC. New is apt to get into one's head, if drunk without water.

AMPH. Ah! certainly I shall tear out that tongue of yours.

MERC. Pass on, my good friend; believe me that no one here will listen to you. I have some respect for wine. Go on, get you away, and leave Amphitryon to the pleasures which he is enjoying.

AMPH. What! is Amphitryon inside there?

MERC. Indeed he is; he himself, covered with the laurels of a single victory, is with the fair Alcmena, tasting the sweets of a charming interview. They are indulging in the pleasures of a reconciliation, after a rather whimsical love-tiff. You had better beware how you disturb their sweet privacy, unless you wish him to punish you for your excessive rashness.

SCENE III.—AMPHITRYON, *alone*.

Ah! how strangely he has shocked my soul! and how cruelly disturbed my mind! And if matters stand as this wretch says, to what condition do I see my honour and affection reduced? Upon what am I to resolve? Am I to make it public or to keep it secret? And ought I, in my anger, to lock the dishonour of my house in my own breast, or spread it abroad? What! is there any need of consideration in so gross an insult? I have nothing to expect, and nothing to compromise; and all my uneasiness only ought to tend to my revenge.

SCENE IV.—AMPHITRYON, SOSIA, NAOCRATES *and* POLIDAS,
at the farther part of the stage.

Sos. (*To Amphitryon*). Sir, with all my diligence, all that I have been able to do is to bring you these gentlemen here.

AMPH. Ah! you are here!

Sos. Sir.

AMPH. Insolent, bold fellow!

Sos. What now?

AMPH. I shall teach you to treat me thus.

Sos. What is the matter? what ails you?

AMPH. (*Drawing his sword*). What ails me, wretch?

Sos. (*To Naucrates and Polidas*). Help, gentlemen! please come quickly.

NAU. (*To Amphitryon*). Oh, pray stop!

Sos. What have I done?

AMPH. You ask me that, you rogue? (*To Naucrates*). No, let me satisfy my just anger.

Sos. When they hang a fellow, they at least tell him why they do it.

NAU. (*To Amphitryon*). Please to tell us what his crime is.

SOS. Yes, gentlemen, please to insist upon that.

AMPH. How! he just now had the audacity to shut the door in my face, and to add threats to a thousand insolent expressions! (*Wishing to strike him*). Ah! you scoundrel!

SOS. (*Dropping on his knees*). I am dead.

NAU. (*To Amphitryon*). Calm this passion.

SOS. Gentlemen!

POL. (*To Sosia*). What is it?

SOS. Has he struck me?

AMPH. No; he must have his deserts for the language he made free with just now.

SOS. How could that have been, when I was elsewhere occupied by your orders? These gentlemen here can bear witness that I have just invited them to dine with you.

NAU. It is true that he brought us this message, and would not leave us.

AMPH. Who gave you that order?

SOS. You.

AMPH. And when?

SOS. After your reconciliation. Amidst the transports of a soul delighted at having appeased Alcmena's anger.

(*Sosia gets up.*)

AMPH. O Heaven! every instant, every step adds something to my cruel martyrdom; and, in this fatal confusion, I no longer know what to believe or what to say.

NAU. All that he has just related to us, of what happened at your house, surpasses the natural so much, that before doing anything, and before flying into a passion, you ought to clear up the whole of this adventure.

AMPH. Come; you may assist my efforts; and Heaven brings you opportunely hither. Let us see what fortune may attend me to-day; let us clear up this mystery, and know our fate. Alas! I burn to learn it, and I dread it more than death.³⁰ (*Amphitryon knocks at the door of his house*).

³⁰ Plautus, who has this scene also, brings upon the stage only one witness—the pilot Blepharo; Molière introduces here two, and afterwards, in the eighth scene, two fresh witnesses.

SCENE V.—JUPITER, AMPHITRYON, NAUCRATES, POLIDAS, SOSIA.

JUP. What is this noise that obliges me to come down? And who knocks as if he were the master where I am?

AMPH. Just gods! what do I see?

NAU. Heaven! what prodigy is this? What! two Amphitryons are here produced before us!

AMPH. (*Aside*). My senses are struck dumb! Alas, I can no longer bear it, the adventure is at an end; my fate is clear enough, and what I behold tells me everything.

NAU. The more closely I view them, the more I find that they are like each other in everything.

Sos. (*Crossing to the side of Jupiter*). Gentlemen, this is the true one; the other is an impostor who deserves chastisement.

POL. Certainly, this wonderful resemblance keeps my judgment in suspense.

AMPH. We have been deceived too much by an execrable scoundrel; I must break the spell with this steel.

NAU. (*To Amphitryon, who has drawn his sword*). Stay!

AMPH. Let me alone!

NAU. Ye gods! what would you do?

AMPH. Punish the vile deceptions of an impostor!

JUP. Gently, gently! There is very little need of passion; and when a man bursts out in such a manner, it leads us to suspect the goodness of his reasons.

Sos. Yes, it is a magician, who has a talisman⁸¹ about him to resemble the masters of houses.

AMPH. (*To Sosia*). I shall let you feel, for your share, a thousand blows for this abusive language.

Sos. My master is a man of courage, and he will not allow his people to be beaten.

AMPH. Let me satiate my fury and wash out my affront in this villain's blood.

NAU. (*Stopping Amphitryon*). We shall not suffer this strange combat of Amphitryon against himself.

AMPH. What! does my honour receive this treatment from you! and do my friends embrace the cause of a

⁸¹ The original has *un caractère*.

rogue ! Far from being the first to take up my revenge, they themselves prove an obstacle to my resentment !

NAU. What would you have us resolve at this sight, when between two Amphitryons all our friendship is in suspense ? Should we now show our zeal to you, we fear making a mistake, and not recognizing you. We see full well in you the image of Amphitryon, the glorious support of the Thebans' welfare ; but we also see the same image in him, nor are we able to judge who is the real one. What we have to do is not doubtful, and the impostor ought to die by our hands ; but this perfect resemblance conceals him between you two ; and it is too hazardous a stroke to undertake without being certain. Let us ascertain gently on which side the imposture can be ; and the moment we have disentangled the adventure, you will have no need to tell us our duty.

JUP. Yes, you are right, and this resemblance authorizes you to doubt about both of us. I am not offended at seeing you wavering thus ; I am more reasonable, and can make allowances for you. The eye can detect no difference between us, and I see that one can easily be mistaken. You do not see me show my anger, nor draw my sword ; that is a bad method of clearing up this mystery, and I can find one more gentle and more certain. One of us is Amphitryon, and both of us may seem so to your eyes. It is for me to put an end to this confusion ; and I intend to make myself so well known to every one, that at the convincing proofs of who I may be, he himself shall agree about the blood from which I spring, and not have any further occasion to say anything. In the sight of all the Thebans I will discover to you the real truth ; and the matter is, undoubtedly, of sufficient importance to require the circumstance of it being cleared up before every one. Alcmena expects from me this public testimony : her virtue, which is being outraged by the publicity of this disorder, demands justification, and I am going to take care of it. My love for her binds me to it ; and I shall convene an assembly of the noblest chiefs, for an elucidation which her honour requires. While awaiting these desirable witnesses, pray, please to honour the table to which Sosia has invited you.

SOS. I was not mistaken, gentlemen ; this word puts an end to all irresolution ; the real Amphitryon is the Amphitryon who gives dinners.³²

AMPH. O Heavens ! can I see myself humiliated much lower ? What ! must I suffer the martyrdom of listening to all that this impostor has just said to my face, and have my hands tied, whilst his discourse drives me furious !

NAU. (*To Amphitryon*). You complain wrongly. Allow us to await the elucidation which shall render resentments seasonable. I do not know whether he imposes upon us ; but he speaks as if he had right on his side.

AMPH. Go, weak friends, and flatter the imposture. Thebes has other friends, different from you : and I am going to find some who, sharing the insult done to me, will know how to lend their hand to avenge my just anger.

JUP. Well ! I await them, and I shall know to decide the quarrel in their presence.

AMPH. Scoundrel, you think perhaps to escape by these means ; but nothing shall shield you from my revenge.

JUP. I shall not condescend to answer this insulting language at present ; and by and by I shall be able to confound this rage with two words.

AMPH. Not Heaven, not Heaven itself, shall shield you from it ; and I shall dog your footsteps even unto hell.

JUP. There will be no need of that ; and you shall soon see that I will not fly.

AMPH. (*Aside*). Come, let us, before he gets out with them, make haste to assemble such friends as will second my vengeance, and who will come to my house to lend me assistance to pierce him with a thousand wounds.

SCENE VI.—JUPITER, NAUCRATES, POLIDAS, SOSIA.

JUP. No ceremony, I beseech you ; let us go quickly within doors.

NAU. Certainly, the whole of this adventure puzzles the senses and the reason.

SOS. A truce, gentlemen, to all your surprises ; and joyfully sit down to feast till morning. (*Alone*). Now for

³² This last saying is even now used as a proverb.

a good feed, and to put myself in condition to relate our valiant deeds ! I am itching to be at it ; and I was never so hungry in my life.³³

SCENE VII.—MERCURY, SOSIA.

MER. Stop. What ! you come to poke your nose in here, you impudent plate-licker !

Sos. For mercy's sake, gently !

MER. Ah ! you are at it again ! I shall dust your coat for you.

Sos. Alas ! brave and generous I, compose yourself, I beg of you. Sosia, spare Sosia a little, and do not amuse yourself in cudgelling yourself.

MER. Who gave you permission to call yourself by that name ? Did I not expressly forbid you to do so, under penalty of a thousand blows ?

Sos. It is a name we both may bear at the same time, under the same master. I am known for Sosia everywhere ; I allow that you should be he, allow that I may be he also. Let us leave it to the two Amphitryons to display their jealousies, and, amidst their contentions, let us make the two Sosias live in peace.

MER. No, one is quite enough ; and I am obstinate in allowing no dividing.

Sos. You shall have the precedence over me ; I shall be the younger, and you the elder.

MERC. No ! a brother is troublesome, and is not to my taste ; and I wish to be an only son.

Sos. O barbarous and tyrannical heart ! Allow me at least to be your shadow.

MER. Nothing of the kind.

Sos. Let your soul humanize itself with a little pity ! Suffer me to be near you in that capacity ; I shall be such a submissive shadow everywhere, that you shall be satisfied with me.

MER. No quarter ; the decree is immutable. If you again have the audacity to enter there, a thousand blows shall be the consequence.

³³ From this to the end of the comedy, *Amphitryon* belongs entirely to Molière.

Sos. Alack! poor Sosia, to what cruel disgrace are you reduced!

MER. What! your lips still take the liberty of giving yourself a name which I forbid!

Sos. No, I was not hearing myself; and I was speaking of an old Sosia, who was formerly a relative of mine, and whom, with the greatest barbarity, they drove out at the dinner hour.

MER. Beware of falling into that mistake, if you wish to remain among the living.

Sos. (*Aside*). How I would thrash you if I had the courage, for your too inflated pride, you double son of a strumpet!

MER. What are you saying?

Sos. Nothing.

MER. You are, I believe, muttering something to yourself.

Sos. Ask any one; I did not so much as breathe.

MER. Certain words about the son of a strumpet have struck my ear, nothing is more certain.

Sos. It must be some parrot awakened by the beautiful weather.

MER. Farewell. If your back should itch, this is the spot where I reside.

Sos. (*Alone*). O Heavens! the cursedest hour to be turned out of doors is the dinner hour. Come, let us submit to fate in our affliction. Let us to-day follow blind caprice, and by a proper union, join the unfortunate Sosia to the unfortunate Amphitryon. I perceive him coming in good company.³⁴

SCENE VIII.---AMPHITRYON, ARGATIPHONTIDAS, PAUSICLES, SOSIA, *in a corner of the stage, without being seen.*

AMPH. (*To several other officers who accompany him*). Stay here, gentlemen: follow us from a little distance, and do not all come forward, I pray you, until there is need for it.

PAUS. I understand that this blow must touch you to the very heart.

³⁴ This scene is taken from Rotrou's *Les deux Sosies*.

AMPH. My grief, alas! is poignant at all points, and I suffer in my affection, as much as in my honour.

PAUS. If this resemblance is such as is said, Alcmena, without being to blame . . .

AMPH. Ah! in the matter in question, a simple error becomes a real crime, and against its will, innocence perishes in it. Such errors, look at them in whatever light you will, touch us in the most delicate parts; and reason often pardons them, when honour and love cannot do so.

ARGAT. I do not perplex my thoughts about that; but I hate your gentlemen for their shameful delay; and that is a proceeding which wounds me to the quick, and of which people who have their hearts in the right place, will never approve. When anyone employs us, we should headforemost, throw ourselves into his concerns. Argatiphontidas is not for compromising matters. It does not become men of honour to listen to the arguments of a friend's adversary; one should listen only to revenge at such times. Such a proceeding does not suit me; and one should begin always in those quarrels, by running a man through the body, without much ado. Yes, you shall see, whatever happens that Argatiphontidas goes straight to the point; and I must crave as a particular favour that the scoundrel shall die by no other hand than mine.

AMPH. Come on.

Sos. (*To Amphitryon*). I come, Sir, to undergo on both knees the just punishment of a cursed insolence. Strike, beat, thrash, overwhelm me with blows. Kill me in your anger, you will do well, I deserve it: and I shall not say a word against you.

AMPH. Get up. What are they doing?

Sos. I have been turned away without ceremony; and thinking to eat and be merry like them, I did not imagine that, in fact, I was waiting there to give myself a beating. Yes, the other I, servant to the other you, has played the very devil with me again. The same harsh destiny seems to pursue us both at present, Sir; and, in short, they have un-Sosiad me, as they un-Amphitryon'd you.³⁵

³⁵ Plautus is full of similar plays on words. For example, in *Trinummus*; *the three pieces of money*, Act iv., Scene 2, the Sharper says to Charminides, an Athenian merchant, and whom he does not believe to be "his

AMPH. Follow me.

SOS. Is it not better to see if anybody is coming?

SCENE IX.—CLEANTHIS, AMPHITRYON, ARGATIPHONTIDAS, POLIDAS, NAOCRATES, PAUSICLES, SOSIA.

CLE. O Heaven!

AMPH. What scares you so? What is the fear with which I inspire you?

CLE. Lord-a-mercy! you are up there, and yet I see you here!

NAU. Do not be in a hurry; here he comes to give the wished-for explanation before us all, and which, if we may believe what he has just said about it, shall at once dispel your trouble and care.

SCENE X.—MERCURY, AMPHITRYON, ARGATIPHONTIDAS, POLIDAS, NAOCRATES, PAUSICLES, CLEANTHIS, SOSIA.

MER. Yes, you all shall see him; and know beforehand that it is the great master of the gods, whom, under the beloved features of this resemblance, Alcmena has caused to descend hither from the Heavens. And as for me, I am Mercury, who, not knowing what to do, has thrashed more or less him whose form I have assumed: but now he may comfort himself; for the blows of a god confer honour upon him who receives them.

SOS. Upon my word, Mister god, I am your servant; but I could have dispensed with your courtesy.

MER. I henceforth give him leave to be Sosia. I am tired of wearing such an ugly face; and I am going to the skies to wash it off entirely with ambrosia.

(Mercury ascends to Heaven.)

SOS. May Heaven forever deprive you of the fancy of coming near me again! Your fury against me has been too inveterate; and never in my life did I see a god who was more of a devil than you!

SCENE XI.—JUPITER, AMPHITRYON, NAOCRATES, ARGATIPHONTIDAS, POLIDAS, PAUSICLES, CLEANTHIS, SOSIA.

JUP. *(Announced by the noise of thunder, armed with his*

own self;" "therefore, in such manner as you Charmidised yourself, do you again un-Charmidise yourself."

thunder-bolt, in a cloud, on his eagle). Behold, Amphitryon, who has imposed upon you; and see Jupiter appear in his own features. (By these signs you may easily recognise him; and it is sufficient, I think, to re-instate your heart in the condition in which it ought to be, and to restore peace and happiness in your family.) My name, which the whole world incessantly worships, quells in this case all scandal that might be spread. (A share with Jupiter has nothing dishonourable in it, and doubtless, it can be only glorious to find one's self the rival of the sovereign of the gods.) I see no reason in it that your love should murmur, and it is I, god as I am, who, in this adventure, should be jealous.) Alcmena is wholly yours, whatever pains may be taken; and it must be very gratifying to your love to see that there is no other way of pleasing her than to assume the appearance of her husband; that even Jupiter, adorned by his immortal glory, could not by himself conquer her fidelity; and that what she granted him has, by her ardent heart, been granted only to you.³⁶

Sos. My lord Jupiter knows how to gild the pill.

Jup. Banish, therefore, your gloomy and heart-felt grief, and restore its wonted calm to the ardour which consumes you. (In your house shall be born a son, who, under the name of Hercules, shall fill the vast universe with his exploits. A glorious fate, bearing a thousand blessings, shall prove to every one that I am your support; I shall make your destiny the envy of the whole world. You may safely flatter yourself with these promised hopes. It is a crime to doubt them: the words of Jupiter are the decrees of fate.) *(He vanishes in the clouds.)*

NAU. Certainly I am enraptured at these brilliant marks . . .

SOL. Gentlemen, will you please to follow my opinion? Embark not in these pretty congratulations: it is a bad investment; and pretty phrases are embarrassing on either side, in such a compliment. The great god Jupiter has done us much honour, and, no doubt, his good-

³⁶ If in this play there had been the slightest allusion to the love of Louis XIV. for Madame de Montespan Molière would certainly not have slipped in this compliment to her husband.

ness towards us is unequalled; he promises the certain felicity of a glorious fate, bearing a thousand blessings, and, that in our house shall be born a very mighty son. Nothing could be better than all this. But, in short, a truce to speeches, and let every one retire in peace. It is always best in these matters to say nothing.

GEORGE DANDIN; OU, LE MARI CONFONDU.

COMÉDIE.

GEORGE DANDIN; OR, THE ABASHED HUSBAND.

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS.

(*THE ORIGINAL IN VERSE.*)

JULY 18TH 1668.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

THE treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle having been ratified on the 2nd of May, 1668, and peace being assured, at least for some time, Louis XIV. resolved to give a festival in his favourite gardens of Versailles, as he had already done in 1664. (See Introductory Notice to *The Princess of Elis*.) This festival was held on the 18th of July 1668, and Molière's comedy, *George Dandin*, formed the chief entertainment. Our author took the plot chiefly from one of his farces, *The Jealousy of the Barboüillé*, in which a wife, who comes home rather late, finds the door shut, and threatens to kill herself if her husband does not let her in. She pretends to do so; the good man rushes out of the house quite terrified; the wife, meanwhile, sneaks in, and he in his turn is locked out. This idea is found in an Indian tale, in *la Roman de Dolopathos*, written in the beginning of the thirteenth century, and also in the fourth story of the seventh day of Boccaccio's *Decameron*. But Molière thought very likely that this plot was too slight for a comedy, and added to it a second idea, which exists in all literatures, namely, the danger of inequality of rank or education in marriage. Most probably, he took it from the eighth story of the seventh day of the *Decameron*, in which is related how Arriguccio Berlinghieri, a rich merchant, married a noble lady, named Sismonda. His wife deceives him; he thinks he has found her out, cuts off all her hair, gives her a sound beating, and even disfigures her. But when he returns with her family—a mother and three brothers—his wife appears in all her beauty and with all her hair, because she had bribed one of her servants to take the well-deserved punishment in her stead. Hereupon the wife accuses her husband of being a drunkard; he is soundly rated both by the mother and the three brawny brothers, and warned not to misbehave again.

The whole of the play is rather extravagant, but it is full of humour; the characters are very well drawn, and the dialogue is spirited. The servant girl Claudine is certainly one of the most impudent hussies whom even Molière has sketched; whilst the family de Sotenville faithfully represent the poor but proud French provincial nobles, as they existed in Molière's time.

It cannot be denied that the impression which *George Dandin* leaves upon our minds is not a healthy one, and that the triumph of an adulterous woman over a husband, who, after all, is only guilty of having

married above his station, cannot be justified. But, in extenuation, we may say that *George Dandin* was written only for a courtly "high jinks;" to excite the laughter of a public, whose risible muscles were not easily moved; and that, after all, the ideas about matrimonial fidelity were not the same at the court of Louis XIV. as they are at the present time amongst civilized nations. The same year (1668) in which Molière's play was acted before the Court, Madame de Montespan, a married woman, became the recognized mistress of the *Grand Monarque*, whilst, later, her children by that King became *enfants légitimés de France*.

This piece was only performed in the theatre of the Palais Royal on the 9th of November,—precisely two months after the first representation of *The Miser*. Grimarest relates an anecdote about Molière, which seems to me very unlike his character, namely, that he read his comedy to a real Dandin before giving it to the public, in order to conciliate the foolish husband, who appears to have been a man of some influence; and that the latter became one of the warmest patrons of the play.

Several English dramatists have imitated this piece. Betterton, the actor, wrote a partial imitation of it, which, under the name of *The Amorous Widow, or The Wanton Wife*, was brought out at the theatre in Lincoln's-Inn-Field in 1670. As Molière's play is in three acts, and Betterton's in five, the latter tacked an underplot to it, consisting of an amorous widow, vastly "prone to an iteration of nuptials," and who at last, not finding any one willing to marry her, takes up with the Viscount Sans Terre, who proves to be a falconer in disguise, and is a reminiscence of the Marquis de Mascarille and the Viscount de Jodelet in *The Pretentious Young Ladies*. Geneste says,¹—"That part of it which is taken from *George Dandin* is very good, the other part of it is indifferent."²

On the 18th of April, 1781, was represented at Covent Garden Theatre *Barnaby Brittle, or a Wife at her Wit's end*, a farce in two acts, altered from Molière and Betterton. It is a condensation of Molière's play, with something added from Mrs. Centlivre's *Artifice*, namely, the scene when the servant Jeremy brings his Mistress' clogs on a plate, and the one in which Mrs. Brittle pretends to have broken her leg. Barnaby is a glass-man.

A farce, called *George Dandin*, was also acted once at Drury Lane Theatre, November 25, 1747; but it has never been printed.

Dibdin, in *The Metamorphoses* (see Introductory Notice to *The Sicilian*) has imitated from Molière's play, the second Scene of the first Act and the seventh Scene of the second Act. The hero is called, in the English play, Don Pedro, and the loutish servant, Perez.

An operatic farce, *December and May*, written by Dimond, and founded on Molière's comedy, was brought out on the 16th of May 1818, at Covent Garden Theatre. The only novelty in it is that Zodolet, the servant of the fast young nobleman, is partly bribed and partly frightened to bear false witness.

In the fifth volume of the translation of "Select Comedies of Mr. de

¹ Geneste, *Some account of the English Stage*, 1832, 10 vols., I. 108.

² In the British Museum, there is a copy of *The Amorous Widow*, printed in 1729, the fourth edition, with the names of three London printers, and containing the Prologue and Epilogue totally different from the copy in the advocates' Library in Edinburgh, published in London in the year 1710, "now first printed from the original copy," and which contains a descriptive list of *Dramatis Personæ*, wanting in the first mentioned copy, but has neither Prologue nor Epilogue.

Molière, published in London, 1732," *George Dandin* has a most impudent dedication to the Right Honourable the Lady * * * *

MADAME,

There's no body to whom this *Play* can with so much propriety be addressed, as to your *LADYSHIP*, whose real Story abounds with more *Intrigue* and *Contrivance* than all that the fruitful *Fancy* of *Molière* has been able to invent.

Your dexterous Management of a Husband is so extraordinary, that other Wives behold it with Envy and Emulation; your Example plainly showing that a Woman may heartily despise her Husband, and at the same time make him believe she loves him, and that Matrimony is so far from restraining that it may be made even subservient to Gallantry.

An Husband not otherwise is a Convenience your *LADYSHIP* well knows how to make proper Use of—most people were indeed surpriz'd at your marrying Mr * * * *, but you *Madame*, (whose Schemes are beyond the Reach of Common Capacities) easily foresaw the advantage of being the Wife of one whom Your superior Rank and Alliances would overawe, whom Your Wit would entirely direct and govern, and whose large Fortune would supply the necessary Expenses of a fine Lady.

I shall attempt no further a Task I am unequal to, but leave the World to praise You as You deserve; permit me only to declare, that I am, with a great deal of Admiration, *MADAM, Your Ladyship's most obedient, and most humble Servant,*
THE TRANSLATOR.

As we have already mentioned, Molière's play formed part of the court entertainment, of which a description was published in 1668, under the name of *Relation de la Fête de Versailles*. This narrative was written by Félibien, but the verses by Molière. We here give a *résumé* of the official description:—

"Having granted peace at the instance of his allies and at the desire of all Europe; having given marks of an unexampled moderation and kindness, even in the midst of his most glorious conquests, the king had no other thought than to apply himself to the affairs of his kingdom, when, in order to make up a little for the pleasures which the court had lost during his absence in carnival time, he resolved to give a fête in the gardens of Versailles, where, amidst the pleasures to be found in so delicious a retreat, the mind could not fail to be charmed with those many astonishing and extraordinary beauties with which this great prince knew so well how to season all his entertainments.

"To attain this effect, wishing to have a comedy after a collation, and the supper after the comedy, to be followed up by a ball and a display of fireworks, he selected those persons whom he thought most capable of performing these things properly. He himself marked out for them those spots, the situation of which he deemed most suitable, from their natural beauty, to contribute advantageously to their decoration; and because one of the most beautiful ornaments of this house is the quantity of water which art has brought there, notwithstanding that nature had not provided it, his Majesty ordered them to make the utmost use of it to enhance the embellishment of said spots, and even gave them the means to employ it, and to obtain the greatest possible effects from it.

"For the execution of this fête, the duke de Créquy, as first gentleman of the chamber, was charged with everything that belonged to the comedy; the marshall de Bellefonds, as first steward of the royal household, took care of the collation, of the supper, and of everything that belonged to the service of the table; and Monsieur Colbert, as superintendent of the royal buildings, had the different places for the royal entertainment constructed and embellished, and gave the orders for the performance of the

display of fireworks. The sieur Vigarani was commanded to arrange the theatre for the comedy; the sieur Gissey to prepare a room for the supper; and the sieur Le Vau, first architect of the king, another for the ball.

"On Wednesday, the eighteenth day of July, the king came from Saint Germain to dine at Versailles with the queen, Monseigneur the dauphin Monsieur and Madame. The remainder of the court having also arrived immediately after mid-day, were met by the king's officers, who did the honours, and received everybody in the salons of the castle, where in several places, were tables for refreshments; the principal ladies were conducted to the private apartments to take some rest.

"At six o'clock at night, the king having given the order to the Marquis de Gesvres, the captain of his guards, to have all the doors thrown open, so that there might be nobody that did not take part in the entertainment, walked out of the castle with the queen and rest of the court, to amuse themselves with a promenade."

Félibien, after having followed the king through all the particulars of his promenade, and having described the splendour of the theatre constructed in the garden continues, as follows:—

Though the piece represented must be regarded as an *impromptu*, and one of these works, in which the necessity to satisfy the orders of the king on the spot, leaves not always time completely to finish and to polish it, it is nevertheless certain that it is composed of parts so diversified and pleasant, that we may safely say that none have appeared on the stage so well calculated to please the eyes and ears of the spectators at the same time. The prose which has been employed is a very fit language for the action it represents, and the verses which are sung between the acts of the comedy, accord so well with the subject, and express so tenderly the passions with which they who recite them must be moved, that there never has been heard anything more stirring. Though it appears that there are two comedies, which are being played at the same time, one of which is in prose and the other verse, they are however so well adapted to the same subject, that they make but one piece, and represent but one action. The overture of the stage is performed by four shepherds, disguised as servants of the fête, who accompanied by four other shepherds, playing upon the flute, perform a dance, in which they force a rich peasant, whom they have met, to take a part, and who, dissatisfied with his marriage, has his head full of annoying thoughts; therefore he very soon retires from their society where he only remained by compulsion.

"Climène and Chloris, who are two companion shepherdesses, hearing the sound of the flutes, come to add their voices to the instruments, and sing—

The other day, I heard
Annette's voice, who,
Whilst playing on the bagpipe,
Was singing in our woods:
O love, how 'neath thy sway
One suffers poignant grief!
I may well say it,
Since I feel it,
At the same moment
Young Lisette,
In the same rhythm as Annette,
Responded tenderly:
O love, if 'neath thy sway,
I suffer poignant grief,
It is because I dare not say
All that I feel.

"Tircis and Philène, the lovers of those two shepherdesses, accost them to tell them of their passion, and go through a musical scene with them.

CHLORIS. Leave us in peace, Philène.

CLIMÈNE. Tircis, do not stop my way.

TIRCIS AND PHILÈNE. Ah, cruel fair one, vouchsafe one moment to listen to me.

CLIMÈNE AND CHLORIS. But what have you to say?

THE TWO SHEPHERDS. Oh with what immortal flame, my heart burns 'neath your sway.

THE TWO SHEPHERDESSES. That is nothing new. You have told me so a thousand times.

PHILÈNE. (*To Chloris*). What! do you wish me to love all my lifetime and obtain nothing?

CHLORIS. No, that is not my wish. Love no longer; I am satisfied.

TIRCIS. (*To Climène*). Heaven forces me to pay you the homage, of which all these woods are witness.

CLIMÈNE. Then it is for Heaven, since he constrains you, to pay you for your trouble.

PHILÈNE. (*To Chloris*). It is by your extraordinary merits, that you have won my affection.

CHLORIS. If I deserve to be loved, I owe nought to your affection.

THE TWO SHEPHERDS. The dazzle of your eyes kills me.

THE TWO SHEPHERDESSES. Then turn away from me.

THE TWO SHEPHERDS. But I like to look at them.

THE TWO SHEPHERDESSES. Then, shepherd, do not complain.

PHILÈNE. Ah! charming Climène!

TIRCIS. Ah! charming Chloris!

PHILÈNE. (*To Climène*). Render her a little more human towards me.

TIRCIS. (*To Chloris*). Make her less contemptuous towards me.

CLIMÈNE. (*To Chloris*). Be sensible to the love that Philène has for you.

CHLORIS. (*To Climène*). Be sensible to the ardour by which Tircis is smitten.

CLIMÈNE. (*To Chloris*). If you will show me your example, shepherdess, perhaps I shall follow it.

CHLORIS. (*To Climène*). If you will resolve to go first, it is possible that I may follow you.

CLIMÈNE. (*To Philène*). Farewell, shepherd.

CHLORIS. (*To Tircis*). Farewell, shepherd.

CLIMÈNE. (*To Philène*). Await a favourable turn.

CHLORIS. (*To Tircis*). Await a sweet success for the grief which you feel.

TIRCIS. I await no remedy.

PHILÈNE. And I await nought but death.

TIRCIS AND PHILÈNE. Since we are doomed to languish under such disgrace, let us, by dying, make an end to our grievous sighing.

"These two shepherds retire, their hearts big with grief and despair; and, following up this music, the first act of the comedy in prose begins.

"The subject of it is, that a rich farmer, having married the daughter of a country gentleman, gets nothing but contempt from his wife, as well as from his father-in-law and mother-in-law, who had only accepted him as their son-in-law for his large property.

"The whole of this piece is treated in the same style in which the sieur de Molière is accustomed to construct his other stage plays; which means, that he portrays in the most natural colours the characters of the personages whom he introduces; so much so, that nothing has ever been seen more closely resembling the vexations in which people often find themselves who marry above their station, than what he has written; and when he depicts the humour and manners of certain provincial nobles, he forms no traits but what perfectly convey their true portraits. At the end of the act the peasant is interrupted by a shepherdess, who comes to tell him of the despair of the two shepherds; but being troubled with other concerns, he leaves her in anger; thereupon Chloris enters, lamenting the death of her lover in the following verses.—

Ah! mortal grief,
What else can still befall me?
Flow on, flow on, my tears;
I cannot shed too many.

Why does a tyrannical honour
Hold our soul bound in slavery?
Alas! in order to satisfy its cruel harshness,
I have driven my lover to abandon life.

Ah! mortal grief!
What else can still befall me?
Flow on, flow on, my tears;
I cannot shed too many.

Can I ever forgive myself, in this fatal affair,
The severe coolness with which I had armed myself?
Why then, my dear lover! have I given you up to death?
Is that, alas! the price for having loved me so much?"

Ah! mortal grief!
What else can still befall me?
Flow on, flow on, my tears;
I cannot shed too many.

"After this lament began the second act of the prose comedy. It is a continuation of the annoyances of the married peasant, who is once more interrupted by the same shepherdess, who comes to tell him that Tircis and Philène are not dead, but have been saved by the boatmen who accompany her. The peasant, worried by all these importunities, retires and leaves the place free to the boatmen, who, delighted with the reward they have received, execute a dance, and go through various evolutions with their boat hooks, after which the third act of the prose comedy is played.

"In this last act, the peasant is seen overwhelmed with grief, through the bad behaviour of his wife. Finally, one of his friends advises him to drown his sorrows in the wine-cup, and takes him with him to join his troupe, having just perceived the advent of the crowd of amorous shepherds, who enter and begin to celebrate, with songs and dances, the power of Love.

"Here the scenery is changed instantaneously; and it is hardly to be conceived how so many real water-jets disappear so suddenly, or by what artifice, instead of all the alleys and harbours, one sees nothing but grand rocks, interspersed with trees, on which are shepherds who dance, and play on all sorts of instruments. Chloris is the first to join her voice to the sound of the flutes and bagpipes.

Chloris.

In this spot the shadow of the elms
Imparts a freshness to the grass;
And the banks of those streams
Are brilliant with a thousand flowerets,

Which are reflected in the water.
 Shepherds, take your bagpipes,
 Attune your piping reeds,
 And let us mix our songs
 With those of the little birds.
 Zephyr, through these streams
 Takes a thousand secret windings,
 And the young nightingales
 Impart their love-breathing ditties
 To the tender branches,
 Shepherds, take your bagpipes,
 Attune your piping reeds,
 And let us mix our songs
 With those of the little birds.

"While the music continues to charm the ears, the eyes are no less agreeably occupied in seeing several elegantly dressed shepherds and shepherdesses perform a dance, while Climène sings—

Ah ! how sweet is it, charming Sylvia.
 Ah ! how sweet is it to be inflamed by love.
 That time of life, which is not spent like this
 Should be deducted from our days.

Chloris.

Ah ! the sweet days which Love vouchsafes us,
 When his burning torch unites two hearts !
 Is there either glory or crown
 Which can compare with his least delights ?

Tircis.

How unjustly we complain of a martyrdom
 Which is followed by such sweet delights !

Philène.

One moment's happiness, in love's empire,
 Repays ten years of sighing.

All together.

Let us all sing Love's admirable power ;
 In this spot let us all sing
 His glorious charms.
 He is the most amiable,
 As well as the greatest of all the gods.

"At these words, there was seen to approach, from the back of the stage, a great rock, planted with trees, on which was seated the whole troupe of Bacchus, composed of forty satyrs. One of them obtrudes his head, and proudly sings the following words :

Stay ! this is too much to venture.
 Another god, whose edicts we follow,
 Opposes himself to the honour, which
 Your pipes and voices dare offer unto Love.
 To such exalted titles Bacchus alone pretends ;
 And we are here to defend his rights

Chorus of Satyrs.

We the delightful sway of Bacchus follow
 In every spot we bow
 To his glorious attractions
 He is the most amiable,
 And greatest of all gods.

"Several of the Bacchus party accompany the music with their dance ; and then was seen a combat between the Bacchanalian dancers and singers, and those who upheld the honour of Love.

Chloris.

It is Spring which restores life
To our fields strewn with flowers,
But it is Love and his torch
That re-animates our hearts.

A follower of Bacchus.

The sun disperses the shadows
With which the Heavens are obscured,
And from the most sombre hearts
Bacchus drives care away.

The Bacchanalian Chorus.

Bacchus is worshipped, on the earth and on the waves

The followers of Love.

And Love is the god who is adored everywhere.

The Bacchanalian Chorus.

Bacchus has yoked beneath his sway the whole world

The followers of Love.

And Love has vanquished gods as well as men.

The Bacchanalian Chorus.

Nothing can equal his matchless sweetness

The followers of Love.

Nothing can equal his precious charms.

The Bacchanalian Chorus.

Fie upon Love and upon his flames.

The followers of Love.

Ah! what pleasure it is to love!

The Bacchanalian Chorus.

Ah! what pleasure it is to drink!

The followers of Love.

To him who lives without love, life has no charms

The Bacchanalian Chorus.

To live and not drink is simply to die.

The followers of Love.

Sweet, charming bonds!

The Bacchanalian Chorus.

Sweetest of victories.

The followers of Love.

Ah! what pleasure it is to love!

The Bacchanalian Chorus.

Ah! what pleasure it is to drink!

The two Chorusses together.

No, no, it is a mistake,

The greatest god of all . . .

The followers of Love.

Is Love.

The Bacchanalian Chorus.

Is Bacchus.

“Upon this a shepherd arrives, who throws himself between the two contending parties to separate them, and who sings these verses.

Shepherds! this is too much. He! why this contention?

Let reason make but one assembly of us.

Love has his charms, Bacchus has his attractions.

They are two deities, who go very well together;

Let us not divide them.

The two Chorusses.

Let us therefore join their amiable attractions,
 Let us join our voices in this delightful spot,
 And let us make the surrounding echoes repeat
 That naught is sweeter than Bacchus and Love.

"All these dancers join together, and amidst the shepherds and shepherdesses are seen four followers of Bacchus, with thyrses, and four bacchantes, carrying a kind of tambourines, which are intended to represent the sieves, formerly used at the feasts of Bacchus. With these thyrses the followers strike on the sieves of the bacchantes, and arrange different postures, while the shepherds and shepherdesses dance more calmly.

"It may be safely asserted that in this work, the sieur Lulli has found the secret of satisfying and delighting everybody, for never has anything so beautiful and so well conceived been witnessed. As regards the dances, there are no steps, but what express the action which the dancers are to carry out, and no gestures but what are as so many unspoken words. If we come to judge the music, there is nothing but what conveys perfectly the passions, and which does enchant the spectators.

"But what had never been seen before is the harmony of voices so agreeable, the symphony of the instruments, the beautiful blending of the different chorusses, the sweet songs, the dialogues so tender and amorous those echoes; and, in short, the admirable management in every part, in which, from the first recitals, the music goes on increasing, from having begun with one single voice, ending in a concert of nearly a hundred persons, which on one stage, and at the same time, were seen to join their instruments, their voices, and their movements in the finale of the piece, leaving everybody in such an admiration as would be difficult to express."

The narrative then continues to describe the beauty of the decorations, gives the name of the ladies who were honoured with an invitation to the table of the king to supper,³—Louis XIV. and his brother, being the only two gentlemen—gets enthusiastic over the different dishes, and a wonderful rock on which was stuck pastry, preserves, and candied fruit "which seemed to grow among the stones and to belong to it," tells us that the queen presided at one table, and that there were a great many other tables laden with eatables, wines, liqueurs, and many other delicacies "which showed that the magnificence of the king was lavished everywhere," becomes quite lyric when giving the details of a room made of foliage, in which were waterworks wonderful to behold; and in which their Majesties and the whole court had a ball; and is full of fervour when graphically delineating the astonishing fireworks, when all kinds of monsters vomited rockets, &c.

M. Félibien ends thus:—"People can see that his Majesty performs all his actions with equal grandeur, and that he is inimitable, whether in peace or in war. However much I have endeavoured to describe this beautiful fête, I acknowledge that my description is very imperfect: people cannot form any idea whatever, by what I have written, of the reality.

³ Among the ladies invited at the king's table I see the name of the Duchess de la Vallière, who was then only tolerated, but not that of Madame de Montespan, at that time the *Grand Monarque's* mistress.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

GEORGE DANDIN, *a rich farmer, husband to Angélique.*⁴

M. DE SOTENVILLE, *a country gentleman, Angélique's father.*

CLITANDRE, *in love with Angélique.*

LUBIN, *a peasant, Clitandre's servant*

COLIN, *George Dandin's servant.*

ANGÉLIQUE, *George Dandin's wife.*

MADAM DE SOTENVILLE.

CLAUDINE, *Angélique's maid.*

THE SCENE IS BEFORE GEORGE DANDIN'S HOUSE IN THE
COUNTRY.

⁴ Molière played this part himself. His dress for this part consisted, according to M. E. Soulié's inventory, so often quoted, of "breeches and cloak of light brown taffeta, with collar of the same; the whole adorned with lace and silver buttons, a belt of the same; a little doublet of crimson silk; another doublet of brocade of different colours and silver lace, to wear over it; a large ruff and shoes." Dandin is, according to Nicot, *Trésor de la langue française*, published in 1606, used to designate a man who foolishly and open-mouthed stares about, *ineptus* and *insipidus*. Rabelais uses this word in the twenty-fifth chapter of the first book of *Gargantua*, which Sir Thomas Urquhart translates "ninny lobcock." He employs *Dandin* also as the proper name of a judge and his son, because it is supposed that this judge used to dangle his legs about, just as the sound of the bells seemed to go, *din, dan, din* (*Pantagruel*, 3, 41). Racine calls his judge in the *Plaideurs*, Perrin Dandin, so does La Fontaine in his fable of *L'Huître et les Plaideurs*. In old French, *dandean* was said of a wilful cuckold. Etienne Pasquier (1529-1615) connects it with *dindan*, the noise produced by ringing the bells; and Hensleigh Wedgwood, in his *Dictionary of English Etymology*, states that the French words *dodiner*, to rock, to shake; *dandiner*, to sway the body to and fro; *dodeliner*, to rock or jog up and down, to dandle; *dondeliner*, to wag the head; and the Italian *dondolare*, to dandle a child, to loiter; and *dondola*, a toy, a child's playing baby, are all more or less connected with the English words "dandle" and "dandy."

GEORGE DANDIN; OR, THE ABASHED HUSBAND.

(GEORGE DANDIN: OU, LE MARI CONFONDU.)

ACT I.

SCENE I.—GEORGE DANDIN, *alone*.

AH! what a strange thing it is to be a woman of quality⁵ and a wife! and what an instructive lesson my marriage is to all peasants who wish to raise themselves above their condition, and to ally themselves, as I have done, to a nobleman's family. Nobility, in itself, is good; it is a thing worthy of respect, surely; but it is attended by so many ugly circumstances, that it is better not to come in contact with it. I have become very knowing on that subject, to my cost, and understand now the way of noblemen, when they allow us to enter their families. We ourselves count for very little in the match: they only marry our property; and I would have done much better, rich as I am, to marry a good and honest peasant's daughter, than to take a wife who holds herself above me, is ashamed to bear my name, and imagines that with all my wealth I have not paid dear enough for the honour of being her husband. George Dandin! George Dandin! you have committed the greatest folly in the world. My home has become unbearable

⁵ The original has *femme demoiselle*. See Vol. I., note 14, page xxxii.
VOL. II. 21 529

to me now, and I never enter it without finding some annoyance.⁶

SCENE II.—GEORGE DANDIN, LUBIN.

DAN. (*Aside, seeing Lubin come out of his house*). What the devil⁶ can that fellow want in my house?

LUB. (*Aside, perceiving George Dandin*). There is some one looking at me.

DAN. (*Aside*). He does not know me.

LUB. (*Aside*). He suspects something.

DAN. (*Aside*). Bless my soul! he will barely nod to me.

LUB. (*Aside*). I am afraid he will say that he saw me come from within.

DAN. Good day to you.

LUB. Your servant.

DAN. You do not belong to this place, I believe?

LUB. No; I have come only to see the feast to-morrow.

DAN. Just tell me, if you please, did not you come out thence?

LUB. Hush!

DAN. Why so?

LUB. Be quiet!

DAN. What is the matter?

LUB. Not a word! You must not say that you saw me come out there.

DAN. Why?

LUB. Good Heavens! because . .

DAN. Well? What?

LUB. Softly. I am afraid they will hear us.

DAN. Not at all, not at all.

LUB. Because I have just been delivering a message to the mistress of the house from a certain gentleman who has an eye upon her; and it must not be known. Do you understand?

DAN. Yes.

LUB. I have been told to take care that no one should see me; and let me beg of you, at least, not to say that you have seen me.

⁶ Strepsiades, the principal character of Aristophanes' comedy, *The Clouds*, utters the same complaint, and for the same reason.

DAN. I do not mean to.

LUB. I am very glad to do things secretly, as I have been told.

DAN. That is all right.

LUB. The husband, from what they tell me, is dreadfully jealous, who will not allow his wife to be made love to; and there would be the devil to pay if it came to his ears. Now, do you understand?

DAN. Very well.

LUB. He is to know nothing of all this.

DAN. To be sure.

LUB. They wish to deceive him quietly. You understand me?

DAN. Perfectly.

LUB. If you go and say that you have seen me come out of his house, you will spoil the whole affair. Do you understand?

DAN. Indeed, I do. What is the name of him who sent you there?

LUB. He is our squire, Viscount of . . . somebody . . . By my troth! I never remember how the deuce they manage to pronounce that name. Mr. Cli . . . Clitandre.

DAN. Is it that young courtier who lives . . . ?

LUB. Yes; not far from those trees.

DAN. (*Aside*). That is why this civil young spark has come to live so close to me. I smell a rat, certainly; and his vicinity had already given me some suspicions.

LUB. Gadzooks! he is the most gentlemanlike man you ever met with. He has given me three gold pieces only to go and tell the lady that he is in love with her, and that he very much wishes the honour of being able to speak with her. It was not much trouble to be so well paid for it, compared with a day's work, for which I get only ten sous.

DAN. Well! have you delivered your message?

LUB. Yes. I found inside a certain Claudine, who understood directly what I wanted, and who gained me speech with her mistress.

DAN. (*Aside*). Oh! what a jade that maid is!

LUB. Odds bobs! this Claudine is as pretty as can be; I have taken a fancy to her, and it will be her fault if we are not married.

DAN. But what answer has the mistress made to this Mr. Courtier?

LUB. She has told me to tell him . . . stop; I do not know if I shall remember it all; that she is very much obliged to him for his affection towards her, and that he must be very careful not to show it, on account of her husband, who is whimsical, and that he must bethink himself to invent something, so that they may converse with each other.

DAN. (*Aside*). Ah! baggage of a wife!⁷

LUB. Jeminy! that will be funny; for the husband will not dream of the trick; that is the best of it, and he will be taken in for all his jealousy. Is it not so?

DAN. That is true.

LUB. Good-bye. Keep silence, mind! Keep the secret well, so that the husband may not know of it.

DAN. Yes, yes.

LUB. As for myself, I shall pretend to know nothing. I am a cunning fellow, and people would not think that I have anything to do with it.

SCENE III.—GEORGE DANDIN, *alone*.

Well! George Dandin, you see how your wife treats you! That is your reward for having wished to marry a lady of quality! You are completely done for,⁸ without being able to revenge yourself; and nobility ties your hands. Equality of condition leaves the husband at any rate the freedom of resentment; and if this were a country wench, you would now have full liberty to right yourself by giving her a good thrashing. But you wished to have a taste of nobility; and you were tired of being master in your own house. Ah! I am bursting with rage, and would willingly box my own ears. What! to listen impudently to the declaration of some fop, and to promise him at the same

⁷ Aimé-Martin says that the resemblance between *George Dandin* and *The School for Wives* (see Vol. I.) has struck all commentators of Molière. Dandin is always told of the faithlessness of his wife, just as Arnolphe is about the stratagems of Agnès. Neither of them, however, succeeds in surprisng the guilty.

⁸ The original has *L'on vous accommode de toutes pièces*, because, in former times, a knight completely armed was called so.

time that his love would be returned! Zounds! I will not let such an opportunity slip me. I must, at this very moment, go and complain to her father and mother, and take them to witness, at all events, of the vexations and annoyance which their daughter causes me. But here they come, just at the right moment.

SCENE IV.—M. DE SOTENVILLE, MADAM DE SOTENVILLE,
GEORGE DANDIN.

M. DE S. What is the matter, son-in-law? You seem quite upset.

DAN. So I have cause to be, and . . .

MAD. DE S. Good Heavens! son-in-law, how unpolite you are, not to bow to people when you approach them!

DAN. Upon my word! mother-in-law, it is because I have other matters to think of; and . . .

MAD. DE S. Again! Is it possible, son-in-law, that you know fashion so little, and is there no teaching you how to behave among people of quality?

DAN. What do you mean?

MAD. DE S. Will you never divest yourself, with me, of the familiarity of that word, mother-in-law, and can you not accustom yourself to call me Madam?

DAN. Zounds! If you call me your son-in-law, it seems to me that I may call you my mother-in-law.

MAD. DE S. That remains to be seen, and the case is not the same. Please to understand that it is not for you to use that word with a person of my rank; that, although you may be our son-in-law, there is a great difference between us, and that you ought to know your place.

M. DE S. That is enough, my love; let us drop that.

MAD. DE S. Good Heavens! M. de Sotenville, you are more indulgent than any one else, and you do not know how to make people give you your due.

M. DE S. Egad! I beg your pardon: I do not require any lessons upon that subject; and during my life, I have shown by a score of energetic actions that I am not a man ever to abate a tittle of my pretensions; but a hint is quite sufficient for him. Let us know a little, son-in-law, what you have got on your mind.

DAN. Since I am to speak categorically, I shall tell you, M. de Sotenville, that I have cause to . . .

M. DE S. Gently, son-in-law. Let me tell you that it is not respectful to address people by their names, and that we must only say, "Sir," to those above us.

DAN. Well then, only say Sir, and no longer M. de Sotenville, I must tell you that my wife gives me . . .

M. DE S. Softly! Let me also tell you that you ought not to say my wife when you speak of our daughter.

DAN. I have no patience! What! is not my wife my wife?

MAD. DE S. Yes, son-in-law, she is your wife; but you must not call her so. You could not do more, if you had married one of your equals.

DAN. (*Aside*). Ah! George Dandin, what a hole you have got into! (*Aloud*). For gracious sake, put your gentility aside for a moment, and allow me now to speak to you as best I can. (*Aside*). A plague upon all this nonsensical tyranny! (*To M. de Sotenville*). I tell you then that I am very much dissatisfied with my marriage.

M. DE S. And the reason, son-in-law?

MAD. DE S. What! to speak thus of an affair from which you have derived such great advantages!

DAN. And what advantages, Madam, since "Madam" it is to be? The bargain has not been a bad one for you; for, by your leave, your affairs, had it not been for me, would have been in a very dilapidated condition, and my money has served to stop pretty large gaps; but, as for myself, what have I profited by it, pray, unless it be the lengthening of my name, and instead of being George Dandin, to have received, through you, the title of M. de La Dandinière?

M. DE S. Do you reckon for nothing, son-in-law, the advantage of being allied to the house of Sotenville?

MAD. DE S. And to that of La Prudoterie, from which I have the honour of being descended; a house where the females ennoble, and which, by that valuable privilege, will make your sons noblemen.⁹

⁹ The contrary was generally the law in France; for if a lady of noble birth married a commoner, she lost her own rank, and her children became commoners. But exceptionally, it was the custom in the province

DAN. Oh! that is good, my sons shall be noblemen: but I shall be myself a cuckold, unless care be taken.

MAD. DE S. What does this mean, son-in-law?

DAN. It means that your daughter does not behave as a wife ought to do, and that she does things which are contrary to honour.

MAD. DE S. Gently. Take care what you are saying. My daughter belongs to a race too full of honour, ever to do aught that might offend honesty; and as for the house of La Prudoterie, thank Heaven, it has been observed that for more than three hundred years no woman has been talked about.

M. DE S. Egad! there has never been a flirt in the house of Sotenville; and bravery is not more hereditary in the males than chastity in the females.

MAD. DE S. We have had a Jacqueline de la Prudoterie, who would never be the mistress of a duke and peer, governor of our province.

M. DE S. There was a Mathurine de Sotenville who refused twenty thousand crowns from a favourite of the King, who asked only for the favour of speaking to her.

DAN. Well! your daughter is not so straight-laced as all that; and she has grown tractable since she has been with me.

M. DE S. Explain yourself, son-in-law. We are not people to support her in any wrong actions, and we would be the first, her mother and I, to do you justice.

MAD. DE S. We do not understand jesting in matters of honour; and we have brought her up in the greatest possible strictness.

DAN. All I can tell you is, that there is a certain courtier thereabout, whom you have seen, who is in love with her, under my very nose, and who has sent her a declaration of his love, to which she has very feelingly listened.

MAD. DE S. By the Heavens above! I would strangle

of Champagne that the children born either from a father or mother of noble rank, became nobles themselves. According to tradition, this privilege was granted to the inhabitants of that province, because they had lost so many men of high birth in the battle of Fontenay (841), near Auxerre, fought between Charles the Bald and his brothers.

her with my own hands, were she to deviate¹⁰ from her mother's virtuous path.

M. DE S. Zounds, I would pass my sword through her body, and that of her gallant, were she to forfeit her honour.

DAN. I have told you what is going on, to justify my complaints; and I ask you for satisfaction in this matter.

M. DE S. Do not torment yourself: I will get it you from both; and I am the man to keep a tight hold over,¹¹ no matter whom. But are you quite positive about what you have told us?

DAN. Quite.

M. DE S. Take great care; for, between gentlemen, these are ticklish subjects; and you must not make a mistake.

DAN. I have said nothing, I tell you, but the truth.

M. DE S. My love, go and talk to your daughter, while I, with my son-in-law, will go and speak with that man.

MAD. DE S. Is it possible, my son, that she could so far forget herself, after the good example which, as you well know, I have set her.

M. DE S. We are going to clear the matter up. Follow me, son-in-law, and do not trouble yourself. You shall see what we are made of, when people attack those who may belong to us.

DAN. There he is coming toward us.

SCENE V.—M. DE SOTENVILLE, CLITANDRE, GEORGE DANDIN.

M. DE S. Do you know me, Sir?

CLIT. Not that I am aware of, Sir.

M. DE S. My name is the Baron de Sotenville.

CLIT. I am very happy to hear it.

M. DE S. My name is well known at court; and in my

¹⁰ The original has *forligner*, an antiquated word, which means, literally, "to deviate from the line." It was applied to nobles who had degenerated.

¹¹ In the original *serrer le bouton*, literally, "to tighten the leathern buckle which holds the reins together;" hence, figuratively, to keep a tight hold over any one.

youth, I had the honour of being one of the first to distinguish myself in the *arrière-ban*¹² at Nancy.

CLIT. So much the better.

M. DE S. My father, Jean-Gilles de Sotenville, had the honour of assisting in person at the great siege of Montauban.¹³

CLIT. I am delighted to hear it.

M. DE S. And one of my ancestors, Bertrand de Sotenville, enjoyed so much consideration in his time, that he was permitted to dispose of all his property, to cross the seas.

CLIT. I can easily believe it.

M. DE S. It has been reported to me, Sir, that you are in love with, and run after a young person, who is my daughter, in whom I am interested (*pointing to George Dandin*), as well as in this man whom you see, who has the honour of being my son-in-law.

CLIT. Who? I?

M. DE S. Yes; and I am glad of the opportunity of speaking to you, in order to have this affair explained, if you please.

CLIT. What strange slander is this! Who has told you that, Sir?

M. DE S. Somebody who believes himself well informed.

CLIT. This somebody has told a lie. I am a gentleman. Do you think me capable, Sir, of such a base act? What! I, love a young and handsome person who has the honour of being the daughter of the Baron de Sotenville! I respect you too much for that, and am too much your humble servant. Whoever has told you this is a fool.

M. DE S. Now, son-in-law.

DAN. What?

CLIT. He is a rogue and villain.

M. DE S. (*To George Dandin*). Answer him.

DAN. Answer him yourself.

CLIT. If I knew who it could be, I would in your presence run my sword through his body.

M. DE S. (*To George Dandin*). Support your assertion.

¹² The *arrière-ban* was the convocation originally made by the King of all the nobles of his states, to march against the enemy.

¹³ The siege alluded to here is no doubt the one undertaken by Louis XIII. in 1621, about a year before Molière's birth.

DAN. It is fully supported. It is true.

CLIT. Is it your son-in-law, Sir, who . . .

M. DE S. Yes, it is he himself, who complains to me about it.

CLIT. Certainly he may thank his stars for belonging to you ; and without that, I would pretty well teach him to talk in such a manner about a person like me.

SCENE VI.—M. and MADAM DE SOTENVILLE, ANGÉLIQUE, CLITANDRE, GEORGE DANDIN, CLAUDINE.

MAD. DE S. With regard to that, jealousy is a strange thing ! I have brought my daughter here, to clear the matter up in the presence of every one.

CLIT. (*To Angélique*). It is you then, Madam, who have told your husband that I am in love with you.

ANG. I ? And how could I have told him ? Is it so then ? I should really like to see you in love with me. Just attempt it, pray ; you will find out with whom you have to deal ; I advise you to try the thing ! Have recourse, by way of experiment, to all the lovers' stratagems : just attempt to send me, for the fun of it, some messages, to write me some small love letters secretly ; to watch the moments of my husband's absence, or when I am going out to tell me of your love : you have only to set about it, I promise you you shall be received as you ought.

CLIT. Gently, gently, Madam ; there is no need to read me such a lesson, or to be so scandalized. Who told you that I thought of loving you ?

ANG. How do I know, who told me just now these stories ?

CLIT. They may say what they like ; but you know best whether I ever spoke of love to you when we met.

ANG. You should only have done so, you would have been welcome !

CLIT. I assure you that you have nothing to fear from me ; that I am not a man to vex the fair ; and that I respect you and your parents too much, to have even the thought of falling in love with you.

MAD. DE S. (*To George Dandin*.) Well, now you see !

M. DE S. Are you satisfied, son-in-law ? What do you say to that ?

DAN. I say that these are cock-and-bull stories; that I know what I know; and that, since I am to speak plainly, she has just now received a message from him.

ANG. What! I have received a message?

CLIT. I have sent a message?

ANG. Claudine?

CLIT. (*To Claudine*). Is it true?

CLAU. Upon my word, that is a strange falsehood!

DAN. Hold your tongue, slut that you are. I know your tricks; and it is you who introduced the messenger just now.

CLAU. Who? I?

DAN. Yes, you. Do not look so innocent.

CLAU. Alas! how full of wickedness people are now-a-days, to suspect me thus, I, who am innocence itself!

DAN. Hold your tongue, you bad lot. You pretend to be a saint, but I have known you for a long time; and you are a sly jade.

CLAU. (*To Angélique*). Madam, have I . . .

DAN. Hold your tongue, I tell you; you may bear the brunt for all the others; and your father is not a nobleman.

ANG. It is a falsehood so gross, and which affects me so much, that I have not even the strength to answer it. It is very horrible to be accused by a husband, when one has done nothing wrong to him! Alas! if I am to blame at all, it is for treating him too well.

CLAU. Indeed you have.

ANG. My great misfortune is that I consider him too much; and would to Heaven that I could tolerate, as he says, the attentions of some one else! I should not be so much to be pitied. Good-bye; I withdraw, and I cannot longer bear to be thus insulted.

SCENE VII.—M. and MADAM DE SOTENVILLE, CLITANDRE, GEORGE DANDIN, CLAUDINE.

MAD. DE S. (*To George Dandin*). Go, you do not deserve the virtuous wife you have got.

CLAU. Upon my word, he deserves that she should make his words come true; and if I were in her place, I would not hesitate about it. (*To Clitandre*). Yes, sir,

you ought to make love to my mistress, to punish him. Insist, it is I who tell you ; it will be worth your while ; and I offer to assist you, since he has already taxed me with it. *(Exit Claudine.)*

M. DE S. You deserve, son-in-law, to have these things said to you ; and your behaviour sets every one against you.

MAD. DE S. Go, endeavour to treat a gentlewoman better ; and take care not to make any more such blunders for the future.

DAN. *(Aside)*. It makes me mad to be put in the wrong, when I am in the right.

SCENE VIII.—M. DE SOTENVILLE, CLITANDRE, GEORGE DANDIN.

CLIT. *(To M. de Sotenville)*. You see, sir, how falsely I have been accused ; you are a gentleman who know the punctilios of honour ; and I demand satisfaction for the insult that has been offered to me.

MAD. DE S. That is just ; and it is the right way of proceeding. Come, son-in-law, give this gentleman satisfaction.

DAN. How ! satisfaction ?

M. DE S. Yes, it is right according to usage, for having wrongly accused him.

DAN. That is something with which I do not at all agree, that I have wrongly accused him ; and I know well enough what I think of it.

M. DE S. That does not matter. Whatever thought may remain in your mind, he denies it ; that must satisfy people, and they have no right to complain of any man who gainsays a thing.

DAN. Thus, if I had found him in bed with my wife, he would get off by simply denying it ?

M. DE S. No more arguments. Make him the apologies which I tell you.

DAN. I ? I am to make him apologies after . . .

M. DE S. Come, I tell you ; there is nothing to hesitate about, and there is no need of being afraid of overdoing the thing, since you are guided by me.

DAN. I cannot . . .

M. DE S. Zounds ! son-in-law, do not make me angry. I shall be taking his part against you. Come, be guided by me.

DAN. (*Aside*). Ah ! George Dandin !

M. DE S. First, take your cap in hand : This gentleman is a nobleman, and you are not.

DAN. (*Cap in hand, aside*). I am boiling with rage !

M. DE S. Repeat after me : Sir . . .

DAN. Sir . . .

M. DE S. I crave your pardon . . . (*Seeing that George Dandin hesitates to obey*). Ah !

DAN. I crave your pardon . . .

M. DE S. For the bad thoughts which I have had of you.

DAN. For the bad thoughts which I have had of you.

M. DE S. It was because I had not the honour of knowing you.

DAN. It was because I had not the honour of knowing you.

M. DE S. And I beg you to believe . . .

DAN. And I beg you to believe . . .

M. DE S. That I am your servant.

DAN. Would you have me to be the servant of a man who wants to make me a cuckold ?

M. DE S. (*Threatening him again*). Ah !

CLIT. It is sufficient, Sir.

M. DE S. No. I will have him finish it, and that everything should be done in due form : That I am your servant.

DAN. That I am your servant.

CLIT. (*To George Dandin*). Sir, I am yours with all my heart ; and shall think no more of what has happened. (*To M. de Sotenville*). As for you, Sir, I wish you good-day, and am sorry that you have had some annoyance.

M. DE S. I kiss your hand ; and, whenever you like, shall give you some sport in coursing.

CLIT. You do me too much honour. (*Exit Clitandre*).

M. DE S. That is how things ought to be managed, son-in-law. Farewell. Remember that you have entered a family that will support you, and not suffer you to be affronted.

SCENE IX.—GEORGE DANDIN, *alone*.

Ah! that I . . . You would have it so, you would have it so; George Dandin, you would have it so; this suits you very nicely, and you are served right; you have precisely what you deserve. Come, everything depends only on undeceiving the father and mother; and perhaps I may find some means of succeeding.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—CLAUDINE, LUBIN.

CLAU. Yes, I guessed well enough that it must have come from you, and that you told it to some one, who related it to master.

LUB. Upon my word, I mentioned only a word of it, as I was passing by, to a man, that he might not say that he had seen me come out. People must be great chatter-boxes in these parts!

CLAU. Really, the Viscount has well chosen his man in taking you for his messenger; and he has employed a fellow who is very lucky.

LUB. Never mind, I shall be more artful the next time, and take greater care.

CLAU. Yes, yes, it will be high time!

LUB. Let us speak no more of this. Listen.

CLAU. What am I to listen to?

LUB. Turn your face a little towards me.

CLAU. Well! what is it?

LUB. Claudine?

CLAU. Well?

LUB. Lack-a-day! Do you not know what I mean?

CLAU. No.

LUB. I' faiks! I love you.

CLAU. Really?

LUB. Yes, the devil take me! you may believe me, as I have sworn it.

CLAU. So much the better.

LUB. I feel my heart going pit-a-pat¹⁴ when I look at you.

CLAU. I am very glad of it.

LUB. What do you do to be so pretty?

CLAU. I do like others.

LUB. Look ye here, a nod is as good as a wink to a blind horse;¹⁵ if you like, you shall be my wife, I shall be your husband, and we shall be man and wife together.

CLAU. Perhaps you will be jealous like master.

LUB. Not at all.

CLAU. As for me, I hate your suspicious husbands, and I want one who is frightened at nothing; one so full of confidence and so sure of my chastity, that he could see me in the midst of thirty men without being uneasy.

LUB. Very well; I shall be all that.

CLAU. It is the silliest thing in the world to mistrust a wife and to torment her. The truth of the matter is that one gains nothing by it: it only makes us think of harm; and most frequently husbands make themselves what they are by their hubbub.

LUB. Well! I shall leave you free to do whatever you like.

CLAU. That is what you should do in order not to be deceived. When a husband relies on our discretion, we take no more liberty than what is right. It is just with them as with those who open their purses to us, saying: take. We use them discreetly, and content ourselves with what is right; but those who cavil with us, we try to fleece them, and do not spare them.

LUB. Be easy, I shall be like those who open their purse; and you have only to marry me.

CLAU. Very well! we shall see.

LUB. Come here, Claudine.

CLAU. What do you want?

LUB. Come here, I tell you.

CLAU. Softly. I do not like fumlbers.

¹⁴ The original has *je me sens tout tribouiller le cœur*. *Tribouiller*, to disturb, to stir, is a very old French verb.

¹⁵ The original has *il ne faut point tant de beurre pour faire un quarteron*: not so much butter is needed to make a quarter of a pound.

LUB. Just a little bit of coddling.

CLAU. Let me alone, I tell you; I do not understand these jokes.

LUB. Claudine.

CLAU. (*Repulsing Lubin*). Have done!

LUB. Ah! how cross you are with folks! Fie, how disagreeable to refuse people! Are you not ashamed to be so pretty, and not wishing to be caressed? He! there!

CLAU. I shall slap your face.

LUB. Oh! how fierce! how savage she is! Fie, out upon you, you cruel minx!

CLAU. You are too fast.

LUB. What harm would it do to let me have my way a little?

CLAU. You must have patience.

LUB. Only a little kiss on account.

CLAU. I am your humble servant.

LUB. Come, Claudine, you can deduct it afterwards.¹⁶

CLAU. Not if I know it! I have been taken in before. Good-bye. Go, and tell the Viscount that I shall take care to deliver his note.

LUB. Good-bye, you cruel fair.

CLAU. That is affectionate.

LUB. Good-bye, you rock, you flint, you stone-block, you everything that is hard in the world.

CLAU. (*Alone*). I must deliver this to my mistress. . . But here she comes with her husband; let us get out of the way, and wait until she is alone.

SCENE II.—GEORGE DANDIN, ANGÉLIQUE.

DAN. No, no; I am not so easily deceived, and I am but too certain that what I have been told is true. I have better eyes than people fancy; and your talk just now has not dazzled me.

SCENE III.—CLITANDRE, ANGÉLIQUE, GEORGE DANDIN.

CLIT. (*Aside, at the far end of the stage*). Ah! here she is; but her husband is with her.

¹⁶ The original has *sur l'et-tant-moins*, an old law-term.



GEORGE DANDIN, OR

the school for husbands

DAN. (*Without seeing Clitandre*). Underneath all your grimaces, I have perceived the truth of what I have been told and the little respect which you have for the tie that binds us. (*Clitandre and Angélique bow to each other*). Good Heavens! leave your bowing and scraping; it is not that kind of respect of which I am talking, and you need not play the fool with me.

ANG. I! play the fool! Not at all.

DAN. I know your thoughts, and understand . . . (*Clitandre and Angélique bow again*). Again! Come, let us cease joking. I am well aware that you think me much beneath you, on account of your birth, and the respect of which I speak does not concern myself; I mean that which you owe to such sacred ties as those of wedlock. (*Angélique makes a sign to Clitandre*). You need not shrug your shoulders. I am not talking nonsense.

ANG. Who dreams of shrugging her shoulders?

DAN. Good Heavens! I am not blind. I tell you once more that marriage is a bond to which we owe every respect; and that it ill becomes you to behave as you do. (*Angélique nods to Clitandre*). Yes, yes, it is very bad of you; and you need not nod your head, and make faces at me.

ANG. I? I do not know what you mean.

DAN. I know it well enough; and I know your contempt for me too. If I was not born a nobleman, I belong at least to a race on which there is no stain: and the family of the Dandins . . .

CLIT. (*Behind Angélique, without being seen by George Dandin*). One moment's conversation!

DAN. (*Without seeing Clitandre*). He?

ANG. What! I did not say a word.

(*George Dandin turns round his wife, and Clitandre retires, making him a profound bow.*)

SCENE IV.—GEORGE DANDIN, ANGÉLIQUE.

DAN. There he is, prowling about you.

ANG. Well! is it my fault? What do you wish me to do?

DAN. I wish you to do what a wife who only wishes to please her husband should do. Whatever people may say, gallants never trouble a woman unless she wishes it. There

are certain sweet looks which attract them, as honey does flies; and virtuous women have a manner that drives them away immediately.

ANG. I drive them away! and for what reason? I am not scandalized at being thought handsome, and it affords me pleasure.

DAN. Just so! But what part would you have the husband act during this gallant performance?

ANG. The part of a sensible man, who is glad to see his wife admired.

DAN. Much obliged. That does not suit me; and the Dandins are not accustomed to that fashion.

ANG. Then the Dandins will be good enough to accustom themselves to it; for, as to me, I declare that I do not intend to renounce the world, and to bury myself alive with a husband. What! because a man thinks fit to marry us, everything must be at an end immediately, and we must break off all intercourse with every living being! This tyranny of husbands is a marvellous thing; and I think it very kind of them to wish that we should be dead to all amusements; and that we should live for them only! I laugh at that, and do not wish to die so young.

DAN. Is it thus that you keep the vows of fidelity which you made to me before the world?

ANG. I? I did not make them willingly, and you forced them from me. Did you, before marriage, ask me my consent, and whether I cared for you? You consulted only my father and mother. In reality, they have married you, and therefore you will do well always to complain to them about the wrongs which you may suffer. As for me, who did not tell you to marry me, and whom you took without consulting my feelings, I do not pretend to be obliged to submit, like a slave, to your will; and, by your leave, I mean to enjoy the few happy days of my youth, to take the sweet liberties which the age allows me, to see the fashionable world a little, and to taste the pleasure of having pretty things said to me. Prepare yourself for this, for your punishment; and thank Heaven that I am not capable of something worse.¹⁷

¹⁷ One of the commentators of Molière, Petitot, has justly observed that the great difficulty in *George Dandin* was the part of Angélique. If she

DAN. Indeed! that is how you take it? I am your husband, and tell you that I do not understand this.

ANG. I, I am your wife, and tell you that I understand it perfectly well.

DAN. (*Aside*). I have a great mind to beat her face to a jelly, and to bring it to a condition never more to charm those gallant sparks. Ah! come, George Dandin; you can hardly restrain yourself, and you had better leave the place.

SCENE V.—ANGÉLIQUE, CLAUDINE.

CLAU. I have been on the tenterhooks for him to go, Madam, to give you this note from you know who.

ANG. Let us see. (*She reads softly*.)

CLAU. (*Aside*). To judge by appearances, what he tells her seems not at all displeasing.

ANG. Ah! Claudine, how prettily this note is worded! How agreeable these courtiers are in all their words and in all their actions! And what, after all, are our country people compared with them?

CLAU. I think that, after having seen them, the Dandins hardly please you.

ANG. Remain here: I am going to answer it.

CLAU. (*Alone*). I have no need, I think, to recommend her to make it agreeable. But here he comes . . .

SCENE VI.—CLITANDRE, LUBIN, CLAUDINE.

CLAU. Really, Sir, you have chosen a clever messenger.

CLIT. I dared not send one of my own servants; but I must reward you, my pretty Claudine, for the good services which you have rendered me. (*He feels in his pocket*.)

had been painted as a victim, she might easily have become too interesting; but, although she states that she was married without having her feelings consulted, she does not pretend to be sacrificed, but simply says that she means to enjoy herself. Later on, we may laugh at the follies and at the humiliations of George Dandin; but we can never approve of the tricks which his wife plays. She does not show any delicacy, and takes advantage of the credulity of her parents, and the weakness of her husband, whom she wishes above all to make her very humble servant. Molière's genius was the first to represent upon the stage a woman deceiving her husband, and yet not enlisting the sympathies of the audience.

CLAU. Eh! Sir, there is no occasion for it. No, no, Sir, you need not give yourself that trouble; I serve you because you merit it, and because I like you at heart.

CLIT. (*Giving her some money*). I am obliged to you.

LUB. (*To Claudine*). As we are going to be married, give it to me, that I may put it with mine.

CLAU. I will keep it for you, as well as the kiss.

CLIT. (*To Claudine*). Tell me, have you given my note to your charming mistress?

CLAU. Yes. She has just gone to answer it.

CLIT. But, Claudine, is there no way to speak to her?

CLAU. Yes: come along with me; I shall let you speak to her.

CLIT. But will she not be displeased? and is there no risk?

CLAU. No, no. Her husband is not at home; and, besides, he is not most to be considered; it is her father and mother; and as long as they are prepossessed in favour of their daughter, there is nothing to fear from the rest.

CLIT. I trust myself to your guidance!

LUB. (*Alone*). Odd boddikins, what a clever wife I shall have! She has wit enough for four.

SCENE VII.—GEORGE DANDIN, LUBIN.

DAN. (*Softly, aside*). There is my man I saw just now. Would to Heaven he could be brought to bear witness to the father and mother of what they will not believe!

LUB. Ah, there you are, Mr. Tittle-tattle, whom I recommended so much not to talk, and who promised so much that he would not! You are a chatterbox, then, and you go and tell again what other people say to you in secret?

DAN. I?

LUB. Yes. You have repeated everything to the husband, and you are the cause of his having made a row. I am glad to know what a tongue you have got; and it will teach me not to tell you anything more.

DAN. Listen, friend.

LUB. If you had not blabbed, I would have told you what is going on just now; but, for your punishment, you shall know nothing at all.

DAN. How! What is going on?

LUB. Nothing, nothing. See what you get by chattering; you will not get another taste, so you can smack your lips at it.

DAN. Stop a little.

LUB. Not at all.

DAN. I wish to say only a word to you.

LUB. Nay, nay. You wish to pump me.

DAN. No, it is not that.

LUB. I am not such a fool as I look. I see what you are driving at.

DAN. It is something else. Listen.

LUB. Nothing of the sort. You would like me to tell you that the Viscount gave some money just now to Claudine, and that she has taken him to her mistress. But I am not so silly.

DAN. Pray . . .

LUB. No.

DAN. I will give you . . .

LUB. Fiddlesticks.

SCENE VIII.—GEORGE DANDIN, *alone*.

I could not, with this idiot, make use of the idea which I had. But the fresh intelligence that has escaped him shall serve the same purpose; and if the gallant is indoors, that will be proof enough for the father and mother, and fully convince them of their daughter's shamelessness. The mischief is, that I do not know how to make the best of this piece of news. If I go indoors, the rascal will escape; and however clearly I may see my own dishonour, I shall not be believed on my oath, and I shall be told that I am dreaming. If, again, I fetch my father-in-law and mother-in-law, without being sure of finding the gallant inside, it will be no other thing, and I shall be in the same plight as before. Can I not find out quietly if he be there still? (*After having looked through the key-hole*). Oh, Heavens! there is no longer any doubt. I have just seen him through the key-hole. Fate gives me an opportunity of confounding my adversary; and, to complete the adventure, it sends the judges whom I need at the right moment.

SCENE IX.—M. DE SOTENVILLE, MADAM DE SOTENVILLE, GEORGE DANDIN.

DAN. Just now, you would not believe me, and your daughter got the better of me ; but at present I have proofs at hand how she serves me ; and, thank Heaven, my dishonour is so plain now, that you cannot doubt it any longer.

M. DE S. How now ! son-in-law, you are still harping upon this ?

DAN. Yes, I am ; and I have never had greater cause to do so.

MAD. DE S. You are going once more to cram your nonsense into our heads ?

DAN. Yes, Madam, and they do worse to mine.

M. DE S. Are you not weary of making yourself such a nuisance ?

DAN. No ; but I am very weary of being made a dupe of.

MAD. DE S. Will you never get rid of your preposterous fancies ?

DAN. No, Madam ; but I would like to get rid of a wife who dishonours me.

MAD. DE S. Good Heavens ! son-in-law, be careful how you speak.

M. DE S. Zounds ! Try to find some less offensive terms.

DAN. The merchant who loses cannot laugh.

MAD. DE S. Remember that you have married a lady of noble birth.

DAN. I remember it well enough, and shall remember it only too much.

M. DE S. If you do remember it, endeavour to speak of her more respectfully.

DAN. But why does she not endeavour to treat me more honestly ? What ! because she is a lady of noble birth, is she to be free to do as she likes to me, without my daring to say a word ?

M. DE S. What is the matter with you, and what can you say ? Did you not see, this morning, that she denied all knowledge of the person you spoke to me about ?

DAN. Yes. But you, what would you say if I show you at this moment that the gallant is with her?

MAD. DE S. With her?

DAN. Yes, with her, and in my house.

M. DE S. In your house?

DAN. Yes, in my own house.

MAD. DE S. If such be the case, we shall take your part against her.

M. DE S. Yes. The honour of our family is dear to us above everything; and if you speak the truth, we shall discard her as our child, and leave her to your resentment.

DAN. You have only to follow me.

MAD. DE S. Take care not to be mistaken.

M. DE S. Do not do as you did before.

DAN. Good Heavens! you shall see. (*Pointing to Clitandre, who comes out of the house with Angélique*). There, have I told a lie?

SCENE X. — ANGÉLIQUE, CLITANDRE, CLAUDINE, M. DE SOTENVILLE, MADAM DE SOTENVILLE, *with* GEORGE DANDIN *at the farther end of the stage*.

ANG. (*To Clitandre*). Good-bye. I am afraid that you should be caught here, and I have to keep up appearances.

CLIT. Promise me, then, Madam, to let me speak to you this night.

ANG. I shall try my best.

DAN. (*To M. and Mad. de Sotenville*). Let us get behind softly, and try not to be seen.

CLAU. (*To Angélique*). Ah! Madam, all is lost! Here are your father and mother, and your husband with them.

CLIT. Ah, Heavens!

ANG. (*Softly to Clitandre and Claudine*). Take no notice, and leave it to me. (*Aloud to Clitandre*). What! dare you to behave in such a manner, after the affair of just now? and is it thus that you disguise your sentiments? I am told that you are in love with me; and that you intend to declare your affection for me; I show my annoyance at it, and explain myself clearly to you before every

one: you stoutly deny the thing, and pledge me your word that you have no thought of offending me; and yet, the self-same day, you have the impudence to come and call upon me, to tell me that you love me, to say a hundred silly things to me to persuade me to respond to your follies; just as if I were a woman to break the vows which I have pledged to my husband, and ever to stray from that virtue which my parents have taught me. If my father knew of this, he would teach you indeed to attempt such things! But an honest woman does not like to make a stir: I do not care to tell him of it; (*Making a sign to Claudine to bring a stick*) and I shall show you that, woman as I am, I have courage enough to revenge myself for the insults offered to me. You have not acted like a nobleman, and therefore I shall not treat you as one. (*Angélique takes the stick, and lifts it against Clitandre, who places himself in such a position that the blows fall upon Dandin.*)

CLIT. (*Crying as if he had been struck*). Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah! gently.

SCENE XI.—M. and MADAM DE SOTENVILLE, ANGÉLIQUE, GEORGE DANDIN, CLAUDINE.

CLAUD. Strike hard, Madam! lay it on thickly.

ANG. (*Pretending to speak to Clitandre*). If you have anything more on your mind, I am ready to answer you.¹⁸

CLAU. That will teach you whom you have got to deal with.

ANG. (*Pretending to be surprised*). Ah! father, you here!

M. DE S. Yes, daughter, and I am glad to see that in your discretion and courage you show yourself a worthy offspring of the house of Sotenville. Come here; let me embrace you.

MAD. DE S. Embrace me also, daughter. There! I weep for joy, and recognise my blood in what you have just now done.

¹⁸ In one of Molière's early farces, *The Jealousy of the Barbouillé* (see vol. III.), and which he played in the provinces, the Barbouillé, followed by Villebrequin, his father-in-law, wishes to surprise his wife and her gallant and receives the blows which she pretends to deal to the latter.

M. DE S. Son-in-law, how delighted you ought to be! and how satisfied you should be with this incident! You had just cause to be alarmed; but your suspicions are allayed in the most fortunate manner.

MAD. DE S. Without doubt, son-in-law; and you ought now to be the most satisfied of husbands.

CLAU. Assuredly. This is what I call a woman! You ought to be only too happy, and kiss the ground she walks on.

DAN. (*Aside*). Oh, you wretch!

MAD. DE S. What is the matter, son-in-law? Why do you not thank your wife a little for the affection which you see she shows for you.

ANG. No, no, father, there is no need for that. There is no necessity to thank me for what he has just witnessed; whatever I have done is only out of self-respect.

M. DE S. Where are you going, daughter?

ANG. I am going away, father, not to be obliged to receive his compliments.

CLAUD. (*To George Dandin*). She is right to be angry. She is a woman who deserves to be worshipped; and you do not treat her as you ought.

DAN. (*Aside*). Wicked wretch!

SCENE XII.—M. and MADAM DE SOTENVILLE, GEORGE DANDIN.

M. DE S. She is rather angry at what happened just now, and it will pass away if you caress her a little. Farewell, son-in-law; you see you have no occasion to be any longer uneasy. Go and make it up together, and try to appease her by apologizing for your anger.

MAD. DE S. You ought to consider that she is a girl strictly brought up, and who is not accustomed to see herself suspected of any bad action. Farewell. I am delighted to see your quarrels ended, and the great joy which her conduct must afford you.

SCENE XIII.—GEORGE DANDIN, *alone*.

I do not say a word, for I should gain nothing by speaking; and never was anything known like my disgrace. Yes, I wonder at my misfortune, and the subtle

skill of my jade of a wife to be always in the right, and put me in the wrong. Is it possible that I shall always be outdone by her; that appearances will always go against me, and that I shall never have a chance of proving the guilt of my shameless wife! O Heaven! assist me in my plans, and vouchsafe me the favour of letting the world see that I am dishonoured!

ACT III.

SCENE I.—CLITANDRE, LUBIN.

CLIT. The night is pretty far advanced, and I am afraid that it is too late. I cannot see where I am going Lubin!

LUB. Sir?

CLIT. Is this the way?

LUB. I think it is. Odds-bobs! This is a silly night, to be so dark as this.

CLIT. It is certainly not right; but if, on the one hand, it prevents us from seeing, on the other, it prevents our being seen.

LUB. You are right, it is not so far wrong after all. It should like to know, sir, you who are so learned, why it is not day at night?

CLIT. That is a great question, and one which is difficult to answer. You are inquisitive, Lubin.

LUB. Yes: if I had studied, I should have thought about things of which no one ever thinks now.

CLIT. Yes, I believe that. You appear to have a subtle and penetrating mind.

LUB. That is true. Look here, I explain Latin although I never learned it; and the other day, when I saw *collegium* written upon a large door, I guessed that it meant college.

CLIT. Marvellous! You can read then, Lubin?

LUB. Yes. I can read print; but I never could learn to read writing.

CLIT. We are near the house. (*After clapping his hands*). This is the signal that Claudine has given me.

LUB. Upon my word ! she is worth her weight in gold ;
and I love her with all my heart.

CLI. That is why I took you with me to entertain her.

LUB. Sir, I am . . .

CLI. Hush ! I hear a noise.

SCENE II.—ANGÉLIQUE, CLAUDINE, CLITANDRE, LUBIN.

ANG. Claudine ?

CLAU. Well ?

ANG. Leave the door ajar.

CLAU. I have done so. (*They are groping about for each other in the dark.*)

CLI. (*To Lubin*). It is they. Hush.

ANG. Hush.

LUB. Hush.

CLAU. Hush.

CLI. (*To Claudine, whom he mistakes for Angélique*).
Madam !

ANG. (*To Lubin, whom she mistakes for Clitandre*).
What ?

LUB. (*To Angélique, whom he mistakes for Claudine*).
Claudine !

CLAU. (*To Clitandre, whom she mistakes for Lubin*).
What is it ?

CLI. (*To Claudine, thinking he is speaking to Angélique*).
Ah, Madam, how happy you make me !

LUB. (*To Angélique, thinking he is speaking to Claudine*).
Claudine ! my poor Claudine

CLAU. (*To Clitandre*). Gently, Sir.

ANG. (*To Lubin*). Softly, Lubin.

CLI. Is it you, Claudine ?

CLAU. Yes.

LUB. Is it you, Madam ?

ANG. Yes.

CLAU. (*To Clitandre*). You have taken the one for
the other.

LUB. (*To Angélique*). Upon my word ! at night one
cannot see a bit.

ANG. Is it not you, Clitandre ?

CLI. Yes, Madam.

ANG. My husband is snoring nicely, and I have taken the opportunity for our conversing together.

CLI. Let us look for a seat somewhere.

CLAU. That is a good idea. (*Angélique, Claudine and Clitandre sit down at the farther end of the stage, upon a piece of turf at the foot of a tree.*)

LUB. (*Seeking for Claudine*). Claudine! whereabouts are you?

SCENE III. — ANGÉLIQUE, CLITANDRE, CLAUDINE, *seated at the farther end of the stage*, GEORGE DANDIN, *partly dressed*, LUBIN.

DAN. (*Aside*). I heard my wife go downstairs, and I have quickly dressed myself to go down after her. Where can she have gone to? Has she left the house?

LUB. (*Seeking for Claudine and catching hold of Dandin for her*). But where are you, Claudine? Ah! here you are. Upon my word, your master is nicely caught, and I think it as funny as the cudgel-blows just now, of which I was told. Your mistress says he was snoring at this moment, like a pig; and he does not know that the Viscount and she are together, while he sleeps. I should like to know what sort of a dream he is having now. It is quite laughable. Why does he get it into his head to be jealous of his wife, and to wish to keep her all to himself? It is like his impudence, and the Viscount does him too much honour.¹⁹ You are not saying a word, Claudine? Come, let us follow them; and give me your little hand that I may kiss it. Ah! how sweet it is! it is like eating jam. (*To George Dandin, whom he still takes for Claudine, and who rudely repulses him*). The deuce! how you go it, your little hand is mighty hard.

DAN. Who is there?

LUB. No one.

DAN. He runs away, and leaves me convinced of a fresh deception of my wretch. Come, I must send for her mother and father without delay, so that this adventure may get me separated from her. Hullo! Colin! Colin!

¹⁹ This is the third time that Lubin has made a confidant of George Dandin, but darkness is the cause of it; twice before it was through Lubin's simplicity.

SCENE IV.—ANGÉLIQUE, CLITANDRE, CLAUDINE, LUBIN, *still seated at the farther end of the stage*, GEORGE DANDIN, COLIN.

COL. (*At the window*). Sir!

DAN. Quick, come down.

COL. (*Leaping out of the window*). Here I am, I could not come more quickly.

DAN. Are you there?

COL. Ay, Sir!

(*Whilst Dandin looks for Colin on the side where he has heard his voice, Colin crosses to the other and falls asleep.*)

DAN. (*Turning to the side where he believes Colin to be*). Softly. Speak low. Listen. Run to my father-in-law and mother-in-law, and say that I beseech them very urgently to come down here immediately. Do you hear? Come, Colin! Colin!

COL. (*On the other side, waking up*). Sir?

DAN. Where the devil are you?

COL. Here.

DAN. Plague take the booby, who is moving away from me! (*While Dandin returns to the side where he thinks that Colin has remained, Colin, half asleep, crosses over to the other, and falls asleep again*). I say that you are to go directly to my father-in-law and mother-in-law, and tell them that I implore them to come here immediately. Do you understand me? Answer. Colin! Colin!

COL. (*On the other side, waking up*). Sir!

DAN. The scoundrel will drive me mad. Come here, I say! (*They run against each other and fall down*). Ah! the wretch! he has maimed me. Where are you? Come here that I may thrash the life out of you. I believe he is running away from me.

COL. Of course I am.

DAN. Will you come here?

COL. Not likely.

DAN. Come here, I tell you.

COL. Not a bit. You wish to thrash me.

DAN. Well! I will not thrash you.

COL. For certain?

DAN. Yes. Come close. (*To Colin, whom he holds by the arm*). Good! It is lucky that I need you. Go quickly and ask my father-in-law and mother-in-law, in my name, to come down here as soon as possible, and tell them that it is on a matter of the utmost consequence; and, should they hesitate on account of the time, do not fail to insist upon it, and to give them to understand that it is most important they should come, no matter how they are dressed. You understand me thoroughly now?

COL. Yes, Sir.

DAN. Get along then and come back quickly. (*Thinking himself alone*). And I, I will go indoors, to wait till . . . But I hear some one. Can it be my wife? I must listen, and take advantage of this darkness.

(*He places himself at his door.*)

SCENE V.—ANGÉLIQUE, CLITANDRE, CLAUDINE, LUBIN,
GEORGE DANDIN

ANG. (*To Clitandre*). Good-bye. It is time to separate now.

CLI. What! already?

ANG. We have conversed enough.

CLI. Ah! Madam, can I have enough of your conversation, and find in so short a time all the words I need. It would take whole days to explain to you clearly all that I feel; and I have not told you yet the smallest part of what I have to say to you.

ANG. We shall hear some more at another time.

CLI. Alas! how you pierce my heart when you talk of withdrawing; and with what amount of grief you leave me now!

ANG. We shall find means of seeing each other again.

CLI. Yes. But I cannot help remembering that, when you leave me, you go back to a husband. This thought kills me; and a husband's privileges are cruel things to a fond lover.

ANG. Are you weak enough to have such anxiety, and do you think it possible to love a certain sort of husbands? We marry them, because we cannot help ourselves, and because we depend upon our parents, who look only to

riches ; but we know how to be even with them, and we take good care not to value them above their deserts.

DAN. (*Aside*). These are our strumpets of wives !

CLI. Alas ! it must be admitted that the one they have given you little deserved the honour which he received, and that the union of a woman like you with a man like him is somewhat strange.

DAN. (*Aside*). Poor husbands ! that is how they treat you.

CLI. You deserve, no doubt, a quite different lot ; Heaven did not create you to be a peasant's wife.

DAN. Would to Heaven she were yours ! you would tell a different tale ! Let us go in ; it is enough.

(*He goes in and locks the door inside.*)

SCENE VI.—ANGÉLIQUE, CLITANDRE, CLAUDINE, LUBIN.

CLAU. Madam, if you have any harm to say of your husband, you had better make haste, for it is getting late.

CLI. Ah ! Claudine, how cruel you are !

ANG. (*To Clitandre*). She is right. We must separate.

CLI. Since you wish it, I must submit to it. But I pray you to pity me, at least, for the wretched moments that I am to pass.

ANG. Farewell.

LUB. Where are you, Claudine, that I may bid you good-night ?

CLAU. Do not trouble. I accept it at a distance, and send you back the same.

SCENE VII.—ANGÉLIQUE, CLAUDINE.

ANG. Let us go in without making a noise.

CLAU. The door is shut.

ANG. I have the master-key.

CLAU. Then open it softly.

ANG. It is bolted inside, and I do not know what we shall do.

CLAU. Call the boy who sleeps there.

ANG. Colin ! Colin ! Colin !

SCENE VIII.—GEORGE DANDIN, ANGÉLIQUE, CLAUDINE.

DAN. (*At the window*). Colin ! Colin ! Ah ! I have caught you at it this time, Mistress Dandin ; and you

make little escapades²⁰ while I am asleep. I am very glad of it, and to see you abroad at this hour.

ANG. Well! what great harm is there in taking the fresh air at night?

DAN. Yes, yes. This is the right time to take the fresh air! It is rather the warm air, Mistress Jade; and we know all about the appointment between you and your spark. We heard the whole of your gallant conversation, and the beautiful verses in my praise which you sang to each other. But my consolation is that I am going to be avenged, and that your father and mother will be convinced now of the justice of my complaints, and of your disorderly conduct. I have sent for them, and they will be here in a moment.

ANG. (*Aside*). Oh Heavens!

CLAU. Madam!

DAN. That is a blow, doubtless, which you did not expect. It is now my turn to win, and I have the wherewithal to put down your pride, and spoil your stratagems. Up till now, you have laughed at my accusations, thrown dust in your parents' eyes, and patched up your misdeeds. I might see and say what I would, your cunning always got the better of my righteous cause, and you have always found some way to appear in the right; but this time, thank Heaven, matters will be cleared up, and your shamelessness will be quite confounded.

ANG. Pray let me in.

DAN. No, no: you must wait the arrival of those I have sent for; I wish them to find you out-of-doors at this nice time of night. While you are waiting for them, you had better contrive, if you like, some new scheme to get out of this scrape; to invent some way to palliate your escape; to find some pretty trick to hoodwink the world and to appear innocent; some specious pretext of a nocturnal pilgrimage, or of some female friend of yours in labour, whom you have just assisted.

ANG. No. I have no intention of disguising anything from you. I do not pretend to defend myself, nor to deny things, since you know them.

²⁰ The original has *escampativos*, a burlesque expression, derived from the old French verb *escamper*, to escape, to take flight.

DAN. That is because you find no loophole left to you, and that in this affair, you cannot invent an excuse of which it would not be easy for me to show the falshood.

ANG. Yes, I confess that I am in the wrong, and that you have reason to complain. But I beg of you, I beseech you, not now to expose me to the anger of my parents, and let me in quickly.

DAN. I would see you far enough first.

ANG. There is a dear good husband! I implore you, do!

DAN. A dear good husband, am I! I am your dear good husband now, because you are caught. I am very glad of it; but you never took it into your head to say these sweet things before.

ANG. There; I promise never again to give you any cause for displeasure, and to . . .

DAN. All that does not signify. I will not lose this opportunity; and I am determined that the world shall know thoroughly your misconduct this time.

ANG. For mercy's sake, let me speak to you. I pray you for a moment's hearing.

DAN. Well! what is it?

ANG. It is true, I have been at fault; I admit it once again, and that your resentment is just; that I have taken advantage of your sleep to slip out: and that I went out to keep an appointment with the person whom you know. But after all, these are actions which you ought to pardon at my age; the follies of a young woman who has had no experience, and has but just entered the world; liberties to which one gives way, without thinking of any harm, and which, in reality, have nothing . . .

DAN. Ay: as you say, these are things in which one ought to have implicit faith.

ANG. I do not wish to pretend by this, that I am without blame towards you; and I only entreat of you to forget an offence for which I heartily beg your pardon, and to spare me, for this once only, the vexation of the severe reproaches of my father and mother. If you will generously grant me the favour which I ask from you, your obliging conduct, your kindness towards me, will win me over entirely; it will thoroughly touch my heart, and pro-

duce there for you what neither the authority of my parents nor the bonds of marriage have been able to instil into it. In short, it will cause me to renounce all gallantries, and to be attached solely to you. Yes, I pledge my word, that henceforth I will be the best wife in the world to you, and that I will show you so much affection, yes, so much, that you will be satisfied.

DAN. Ah! you crocodile, that flatters people to strangle them! ²¹

ANG. Grant me this favour.

DAN. Not a jot. I am inexorable.

ANG. Show yourself generous.

DAN. No.

ANG. For pity's sake!

DAN. Not at all.

ANG. I implore you with all my heart.

DAN. No, no, no. I wish them to be undeceived about you, and that your disgrace may be made public.

ANG. Very well! if you drive me to despair, I warn you that a woman, in that condition, is capable of everything, and that I shall do something of which you shall repent. ²²

DAN. And what will you do, pray?

ANG. I shall be driven to the most desperate resolution; and with this knife shall I kill myself on the spot. ²³

DAN. Ha! ha! Well and good.

ANG. Not so well and good as you imagine. People are acquainted, on all hands, with our quarrels and the perpetual ill-will which you foster against me. When they find me dead, no one will doubt that you have killed me; and, certainly, my parents are not the people to leave my death unpunished, and they will punish you to the utmost extent which the law and the heat of their resentment will allow. That is the way in which I shall find means to be revenged upon you; and I am not the first who has had

²¹ In the eleventh scene of *The Jealousy of the Barbouillé* (see Vol. III.), one of Molière's earliest farces, which he played in the provinces, the Barbouillé says almost the same thing to his wife, who is also called Angélique.

²² Angélique, in the eleventh scene of *The Jealousy of the Barbouillé*, says nearly the same thing.

²³ This is also said by Angélique in *The Jealousy of the Barbouillé*.

recourse to that kind of vengeance; and who has not scrupled to take her own life, in order to destroy those who had the cruelty to drive her to this last extremity.

DAN. I am not to be caught in that way. People no longer kill themselves; and the fashion has gone out long since.

ANG. You may rely upon my doing it; and if you persist in your refusal, if you do not let me in, I swear to you that I shall immediately show you how far the resolution of a desperate woman will go.

DAN. Nonsense, nonsense. You wish to frighten me.

ANG. Very well! since it must be, this will content us both, and will show whether I am jesting. (*After having pretended to kill herself*). Ah! it is done. Heaven grant that my death may be avenged as I wish, and that he who is the cause of it may receive a just chastisement for his cruelty towards me!

DAN. Good gracious! can she have been malicious enough to kill herself to get me hanged? Let us take a bit of candle to go and see.²⁴

SCENE IX.—ANGÉLIQUE, CLAUDINE.

ANG. Hush! keep still. Let us place ourselves immediately, one on each side of the door.

SCENE X.—ANGÉLIQUE and CLAUDINE, *entering the house as soon as George Dandin comes out, and immediately bolting the door inside*; GEORGE DANDIN, *with a candle in his hand, without perceiving them*.

DAN. Can the wickedness of a woman go as far as that? (*Alone, after looking everywhere*). There is no one here. Well! I thought so; and the hussy is gone away, finding that she could gain nothing from me, either by prayers or threats. So much the better! it will make matters still worse for her; and her father and mother will see her crime all the more plainly when they come. (*After hav-*

²⁴ Angélique's last remark and Dandin's reply are, with some variations, found also in *The Jealousy of the Barbouillé*. (See Vol. III.). In the old fabliaux, there is a tale similar to George Dandin. (See Introductory Notice); but the woman, in order to frighten her husband, throws a big stone into a well.

ing been at his door, to go in). Ah! ah! the door has fallen to. Hullo! ho! some one! open the door for me quickly!

SCENE XI.—ANGÉLIQUE and CLAUDINE, *at the window*,
GEORGE DANDIN.

ANG. What! is it you? Where have you been, you wretch? Is this a time to come home, when it is nearly daybreak? and is this the life which an honest husband ought to lead?

CLAU. A pretty thing to go about drinking all night, and to leave a poor young creature of a wife by herself at home?

DAN. What! you have . . .

ANG. Get along, you wretch, get along; I am sick of your goings-on, and I will complain of them, without delay, to my father and mother.

DAN. What! You dare to . . .

SCENE XII.—M. and MADAM DE SOTENVILLE, *in their night-gowns*, COLIN, *carrying a lantern*, ANGÉLIQUE and CLAUDINE, *at the window*, GEORGE DANDIN.

ANG. (*To M. and Madam de Sotenville*). Pray come here to protect me against the most consummate insolence of a husband, whose brain has been so muddled by wine and jealousy that he no longer knows what he is saying or doing, and has himself sent for you to make you witnesses of the most extravagant behaviour you ever heard of. This is how he comes back, as you may see, after making me wait all night for him; and were you to listen to him, he will tell you that he has the greatest complaints to make against me; that while he was asleep, I left his side to go gadding about, and a hundred other stories of the same nature, which he has taken into his head.

DAN. (*Aside*). There is a wicked strumpet!

CLAU. Yes, he wishes to make out that he was in the house, and that we were outside; and it is a fancy which we cannot drive out of his head.

M. DE S. How now! What means all this?

MAD. DE S. Here is a confounded impudence, to send for us.

DAN. Well I never . . .

ANG. No, father, I can no longer put up with such a husband: my patience is exhausted; and he has been saying all manner of insulting words to me.

M. DE S. (*To George Dandin*). Zounds! you are a vile fellow.

CLAU. It is pity to see a poor young wife treated in such a fashion; it cries to Heaven for vengeance.

DAN. Can any one . . .

M. DE S. You ought to die with shame.

DAN. Allow me to say two words.

ANG. Only listen to him: he will tell you something pretty!

DAN. (*Aside*). I give it up in despair.

CLAU. He has drunk so much, that there is no staying near him; and the scent of the wine which he exhales comes up even to us.

DAN. Sir father-in-law, I implore you . . .

M. DE S. Withdraw: your breath smells offensively of wine.²⁵

DAN. I pray you, Madam . . .

MAD. DE S. Away! do not come near me; your breath is filthy.

DAN. (*To M. de Sotenville*). Allow me to . . .

M. DE S. Withdraw: I tell you, there is no bearing you.

DAN. (*To Mad. de Sotenville*). For pity's sake, let me . . .

MAD. DE S. Fie upon it! you make me sick. Speak if you will, but at a distance.

²⁵ Chamfort, in his *Eloge de la Fontaine*, says justly: "Who represents best the effects of prejudice: M. de Sotenville, saying to a man who has not been taking a drop of wine, "Withdraw, your breath smells offensively of wine," or the Bear (in La Fontaine's fable of *The Bear and the two Comrades*), who, in taking a living, but sleeping, man for a corpse, says to himself, "Let us go away, for he smells?" Compare Congreve's *The Way of the World* (iv., 10 and 11), where Mrs. Millamant says to Lady Wishfort, "Your pardon, Madam, I can stay no longer; Sir Wilful grows very powerful. Eh! how he smells, I shall be overcome, if I stay." And Lady Wishfort replying, "Smells! He would poison a tallow-chandler and his family." But Sir Wilful Witwoud is really intoxicated.

DAN. Very well, then, I will speak at a distance. I swear to you that I have not stirred out of the house, and that it was she who went out.

ANG. Did I not tell you so?

CLAU. You see how likely that is.

M. DE S. (*To George Dandin*). Go, you are jesting with people. Descend, daughter, and come here.

SCENE XIII.—M. and MADAM DE SOTENVILLE, GEORGE DANDIN, COLIN.

DAN. I take Heaven to witness that I was in the house, and that . . .

M. DE S. Hold your tongue ; this extravagance is unbearable.

DAN. May a thunderbolt strike me on the spot, if . . .

M. DE S. Do not pester my head any longer, but rather think of asking your wife's pardon.

DAN. I! ask pardon?

M. DE S. Yes, pardon, and immediately.

DAN. What! I . . .

M. DE S. Zounds! if you answer me, I shall teach you what it is to make fools of us.

DAN. Ah! George Dandin!

SCENE XIV.—M. and MADAM DE SOTENVILLE, ANGÉLIQUE, CLAUDINE, GEORGE DANDIN, COLIN.

M. DE S. Come hither, daughter, that your husband may ask your pardon.

ANG. I! pardon him all that he has said to me? No, no, father, I cannot possibly make up my mind to it; and I beg of you to separate me from a husband with whom I can no longer live.

CLAU. How can she bear it?

M. DE S. Such separations, daughter, are not brought about without a great deal of scandal; and you should show yourself wiser than he, and be patient once more.

ANG. How can I be patient after such indignities? No, father, I cannot consent to it.

M. DE S. You must, daughter; I command you.

ANG. This word stops my mouth. You have absolute authority over me.

CLAU. What gentleness!

ANG. It is vexatious to have to overlook such insults; but, whatever violence I may do to my feelings, it is my duty to obey you.

CLAU. Poor lamb!

M. DE S. (*To Angélique*). Draw near.

ANG. Whatever you make me do will be of no use; we shall have to recommence to-morrow, you will see.

M. DE S. We shall put a stop to it. (*To George Dandin*). Come! go down on your knees.

DAN. On my knees?

M. DE S. Yes, on your knees, and without delay.

DAN. (*Kneeling with a candle in his hands*). (*Aside*). Oh! Heavens! (*To M. de Sotenville*). What am I to say?

M. DE S. Madam, I beg of you to pardon me . . .

DAN. Madam, I beg of you to pardon me . . .

M. DE S. The folly I have committed . . .

DAN. The folly I have committed . . . (*Aside*), of marrying you.

M. DE S. And I promise you, to behave better for the future.²⁶

DAN. And I promise you, to behave better for the future.

M. DE S. (*To George Dandin*). Take care, and remember that this is the last of your impertinences that we shall endure.

MAD. DE S. By the Heavens above us! if you try them again, you shall be taught the respect due to your wife, and to those from whom she is descended.

M. DE S. The day is breaking. Farewell. (*To George Dandin*). Go in, and learn to behave better. (*To Madam de Sotenville*). And we, love, let us go to bed.

SCENE XV.—GEORGE DANDIN, *alone*.

Ah! I give it up altogether, and I can see no help for it. When one has married, as I have done, a wicked wife, the best step which one can take is to go and throw one's self into the water, head foremost.

²⁶ In former times, criminals were sometimes legally condemned to ask pardon publicly. This was called *amende honorable*. The culprit was in his shirt, with a burning torch in one hand, kneeling, and with a rope round his neck. George Dandin, half-undressed, with his candle, and on his knees, gives no bad idea of such an exhibition.

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